Chronicles

December 2001 A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE $3.95

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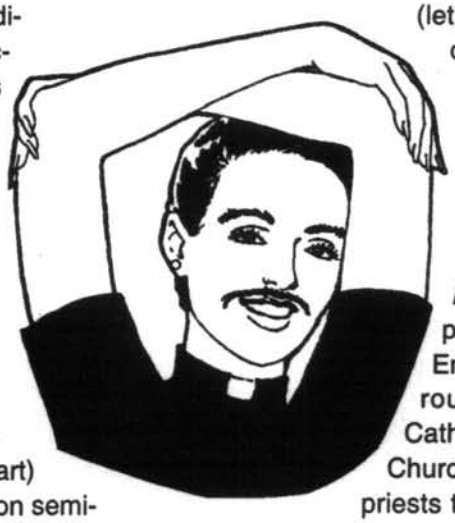
"Real Men Don't Become Priests"

Could that be true? If so, Heaven help us! We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW have been hearing more and more that the priesthood is becoming a "gay profession" like hairdressing. We recently received a poignant letter from a seminarian, which we printed. Said he: "When I left my job as a teacher at a Catholic high school to enter our diocesan seminary, the typical reaction I received from my students was, 'You're going to be a priest? But you're *not* gay.' At the time I was shocked. It did not take me long, however, to realize that their notions were well founded. For many years we have heard about the shortage of priests, and there has been much talk on the subject of 'gay' seminarians and priests. It should be glaringly obvious that the latter has (at least in part) caused the former. Until the common seminary policy of not considering an applicant's sexual orientation (despite 10 hours of psychological testing, I was never even asked if I were 'gay') is rethought, our young men will continue to view the priesthood as an option that is not for normal males."



Then there are all the sex scandals. We don't have precise information, but our impression is that more often than not, a sex scandal involves same-sex transgressions. Clerical culture is all male. When that culture is attracting a highly disproportionate percentage of people who have same-sex attractions, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to figure out that there's going to be libidinal trouble in spades — that attraction will lead to temptation, then to giving in to temptation, and then to an entire subculture of homosexually-*active* priests who protect one another from scrutiny and lawsuits.

Yes, homosexually-oriented *celibate* priests who are orthodox and obedient to Church norms, who are splendid priests, do exist. But when they must function in a priestly culture that's electric with same-sex attractions, the temptations and (let's face it) the solicitations they must contend with will be daunting. It's no favor to them to make them function in such an environment.

And let no one think that allowing priests to marry would solve the problem. It would have no effect on homosexuals. *The Times of London* recently indicated that priests in the (Anglican) Church of England are dying of AIDS at a rate roughly 2 to 3 times greater than Catholic priests in the U.S. — and the Church of England has *always* allowed priests to marry! No, the problem isn't the celibacy requirement. The problem is a hideous breakdown in basic Christian faith and morality.

Actually, we have plenty of real men in the priesthood. But when the priesthood gets characterized as a "gay profession" and sex scandals are a common occurrence, unwarranted suspicion is cast upon all our good, hard-working priests. We've got a big problem.

You may have noticed that many Catholic publications and leaders don't want to face the serious problems in the Church. We at the NEW OXFORD REVIEW, an orthodox Catholic monthly magazine, don't sweep problems under the rug. We deal with them, and with *all the issues* of concern to loyal Catholics. Subscribe today and be part of the solution!

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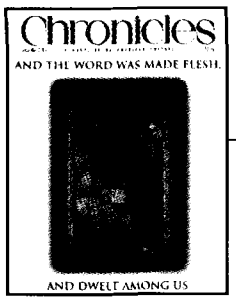

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A publication of The Rockford Institute.
Editorial and Advertising Offices:
928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103.
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Advertising Phone: (815) 964-5813.
Subscription Department: P.O. Box 800,
Mount Morris, IL 61054. Call 1-800-877-5459.

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Chronicles: A Magazine of American Culture
(ISSN 0887-5731) is published monthly for $39.00 (foreign subscriptions add $12 for surface delivery, $48 for Air Mail) per year by The Rockford Institute, 928 North Main Street, Rockford, IL 61103-7061. Preferred periodical postage paid at Rockford, IL and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Chronicles*, P.O. Box 800, Mount Morris, IL 61054.

The views expressed in *Chronicles* are the authors' alone and do not necessarily reflect the views of The Rockford Institute or of its directors. Unsolicited manuscripts cannot be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope.

Chronicles
A MAGAZINE OF AMERICAN CULTURE

Vol. 25, No. 12 December 2001
Printed in the United States of America

POLEMICS & EXCHANGES

On Real Cornishmen

In "Real Diversity" (*Views*, September), Dr. Roger McGrath implies that the Cornish are virtuous or otherwise worthy of praise because they could serve their East Anglian, whiggish industrial masters with ant-like aplomb and distinction. He praises just those qualities that a mechanized society of robotic workers would covet. In his mind, the Cornish people were "good" to the extent they obeyed the still, small voice of modernity. Their temperance and their shrewdness served them well, Dr. McGrath argues, in the scramble to build a society that mirrored the machinations of America's industrial dynamo. They receive an additional pat on the head for contributing, through their mining efforts, to the abstraction of all work and commodity value into "money."

I disagree: A true Cornishman doesn't share the vision of such men as Jay Gould, Henry Ford, and Bill Gates. A Cornishman belongs on his own patch of land, no matter how hardscrabble. He deserves to till the miserly mead until it yields enough barley and malt for a keg of beer. He claims a wife, a few healthy animals, and the fish of the stream.

Rendered docile by the directors of America's industrial consolidation, Dr. McGrath's Cornishman probably had little time to reflect on his self-sufficient, honor-bound ancestors: the men who routed the Parliamentarian forces at Braddock Downe in 1645, who fought for the king with pitchforks and thrown stones.

The earl of Clarendon was more generous when he observed that the Cornish "were always more sparing than is usually known in civil wars, shedding very little blood after resistance was given over, and having a very noble and Christian sense of the lives of our brethren: insomuch as the common men, when they have been pressed by some fiercer officer to follow the execution, have answered 'they could not find it in their hearts to hurt men who had nothing in their hands.'"

For Dr. McGrath, this Christian ideal is subsumed in the interest of economic utility. It is a secondary, sociological phenomenon. For the Cornishman of old, such virtue was the only thing that mattered.

—*M. Edward Tobin*
Pleasant Hill, CA

Dr. McGrath Replies:

My description of Cousin Jacks as the "best hardrock miners in the world" inspired all of this? My father-in-law, whose father was a Cornish immigrant, found room for criticism also, admonishing me for devoting half of the article to the Pennsylvania Dutch.

On Pleading Insanity

Janet Scott Barlow missed the point completely in her article about the Houston woman who drowned her six children in June ("Hearing More, Feeling Less," *Vital Signs*, September). She interpreted the woman's husband's matter-of-fact, emotionless demeanor in front of the press the day after the killing as a by-product of "an explosion of coverage." Thus, Mrs. Barlow's central point seems to be a strong disapproval of "media whores."

At the press conference, the husband clearly stated his wife's drowning of the children was a symptom of her depression; that she did not mean to kill the children, but that she was sick; that she loved her children. He was there in front of all those journalists to defend his wife's innocence. He explained her behavior as if it were the case of a mother who failed to feed her children after she had suffered an acute attack of meningitis, causing her to lose consciousness—no intention, no guilt, just a biologically determined phenomenon.

The husband's demeanor and behavior were perfectly in line with the official position of the American Psychiatric Association (APA) and the American Medical Association (AMA): Depression and many other "mental illnesses" may cause a person to kill another person unintentionally. The killer is not a murderer but a victim who deserves compassion and treatment rather than blame and punishment. In short: The husband was using an "insanity defense."

The insanity defense is an invention that has nothing to do with biology but a lot to do with whitewashing, for a fee, troublesome human behaviors. This ever-expanding ideology has left little

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room for guilt. Every evil behavior is "sickness." Stealing, gambling, gluttony, obscenity, or killing are all symptoms of mental illnesses, according to the APA and the AMA. The insanity defense is a safety valve that permits people to close their eyes to the darkest pits of the human soul.

The truth is that depression, phobias, and anxieties do not cause people to change or lose their moral sense. To attribute bad (or horrible) behavior to them is not merely false; it provides an easy way out for some and stigmatizes the majority of those afflicted by those emotional states.

—Nelson Borelli, M.D.
Chicago, IL

Mrs. Barlow Replies:

I did not characterize the Houston father's response in the presence of reporters as "matter-of-fact" or "emotionless." Nor did I "interpret" his demeanor as a "by-product" of intense media coverage. Further, I paid no attention to the content of his revelations about his wife's emotional history. Neither what the father said nor how he said it was of interest to me. What did interest me—what unnerved and disturbed me—was the mere fact of the father's voluntary participation, at that personally catastrophic moment, in a front-yard press conference, and the further fact that neither he nor the assembled reporters appeared to consider his participation in any way questionable. My only point, aside from Dr. Borelli's correct notation of my loathing of media whores, was that we would be a more self-respecting society if victims of horrific human loss—e.g., the Houston father—possessed neither the desire nor the emotional wherewithal to share the intimacies of their feelings with mass television audiences and a pathologically sensationalistic press.

As for Dr. Borelli's preoccupation with, and apparent disapproval of, AMA and APA support for the insanity defense, I must again confess disinterest (notwithstanding my inclination to agree with him). What I tried to express in my article was a personal resistance to glib and easy understanding of a mother who methodically drowns her children. The criminal-justice system now demands accountability for Andrea Yates's actions, so the debate will rage on: the clinical argument (she is mentally ill and therefore to be treated as a patient) *vs.* the moral argument (she is a murderer and therefore to be treated as a criminal) *vs.* the political argument (she is the victim of a patriarchal society and therefore to be treated as an icon). While these arguments range from questionable to less questionable to idiotic, the fact remains: I do not understand what Andrea Yates did, and I'm not sure I want to understand it.

Finally, Andrea Yates had, and drowned, five children, not six, as Dr. Borelli states. This is not a petty point. Except for the fact that the "issues" generated by Yates have their origins in her children's death, those children—four boys and a baby girl—have been nearly irrelevant to the story. As the media continue to "define" Yates's actions and "understand" her behavior, her five children are all but forgotten. Nothing is written of their individual uniqueness, their irreplaceability in this world, or their suffering as they died. The motivations of a jailed woman are a story. The humanity of five dead children is not.

On Acute Observations

I should like to tell you how immensely I admire your magazine, *Chronicles*—its acute observations, its brilliant style of writing, even its selection of poetry—but I lack the skill to do so. However, please be aware that the arrival of *Chronicles* each month is a joyous and exciting event.

Thank you to all of the fine people who write for and help you produce such a marvelous magazine.

—Tom Perkins
Huntersville, NC

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AFTER SEPTEMBER 11, voices from many quarters have urged Americans to reflect on the reasons for the widespread hatred that the United States endures abroad. This is doubtless good advice: Such historical reflection is always worthwhile, and the pressing need for it is amplified in times of trouble.

But whether these voices genuinely seek historical reflection (as opposed to thoughtless ideological applause) is an open question. In particular, one quarter—we might call it the academic/Hollywood left or, more broadly, the NPR crowd—has been quick to assume, as usual, that an understanding of the sources of anti-Americanism will translate fluidly into a particular political attitude: left-liberal, vaguely pacifist, archly therapeutic, smitten with the abstract charm of human rights. This assumption is historically and politically inept, and more a cause of anti-American feeling than an analysis of it.

But what, precisely, is "anti-American feeling"? The specific grievances on the lists of anti-Americans around the world vary from year to year and from region to region, but the rhetorical melody of anti-Americanism remains fairly constant across many contexts. The old tune has not changed much since the end of World War II, perhaps not since the annexation of Hawaii, or even, in a way, since Fort Sumter. It goes something like this: The United States is arrogant, powerful, self-righteous, and naive. America wishes to remake the world in its own image and congratulates itself heartily on the moral sensitivity it brings to this task, all the while knowing little and caring less about the distinctive civilizations it sets out to liberalize and homogenize in the name of a universal regime of human rights and free-flowing capital. In U.S. imperialism, so goes the song, two unlovely American types—the sadistic bully and the priggish schoolmarm—have joined to produce an ugly, preening, bastard offspring.

Now, this old song isn't too far wrong, but most Americans have been reluctant to sing it—understandably perhaps, as it suggests that the land they justifiably love has made grave errors throughout its history, has taken the bad path at many an historical fork. Besides, this silent majority thinks, we are powerless: The domestic and international entanglements of the American administrative state are now so extensive that they cannot be controlled, much less curtailed. Leviathan America is quite beyond us now, too huge, too vast, too complex, and thinking about past mistakes will not undo them—better to close your eyes and hope for the best. This sort of historical amnesia, however pernicious, is quite understandable: For good or ill, forgetfulness is as much a necessary part of patriotism—or national loyalty, anyway—as are "the mystic chords of memory." Indeed, such forgetfulness is the background silence against which those "mystic chords" become audible in the first place.

But the NPR crowd has never had much trouble warbling out at least one verse of the anti-American anthem: They are always ready to denounce America's past, and to issue tear-stained, ahistorical apologies to perceived victims of that history. They are indignant partisans of peace and justice, passionate believers that "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." They thus advocate a vigorous and comprehensive program of human rights, both at home and abroad, for they understand that many other Americans are prone to evil, backward in their patriotism, their religion, and their local attachments, and require restraint, as do many miscreants and monsters around the world. Members of the NPR crowd are in favor of culture, of all cultures: For them, the world is a vast museum of diverse cultural forms, and the quaintness of each should be preserved. Unlike the bulk of their benighted American countrymen, they know that culture is a harmless and sophisticated entertainment, save when it tries to interfere with a person's right to self-development.

I hope the point of my sarcasm is clear: The attitude of the NPR crowd is precisely the mix of bully and schoolmarm—arrogance, power, self-righteousness, naiveté—that gives rise to anti-American feeling abroad. It is not only insensitive and hawkish boors who give America a bad name; refined partisans of uplift and enlightenment crusading "to make the world safe for democracy" have done their part as well. The NPR crowd's attitude is at least as triumphalistically Wilsonian as President Bush's confused and disturbing intention to "rid the world of evil" in the name of freedom.

The condescending and unprincipled quasi-pacifism that has emerged in some sectors of the NPR crowd since September 11 makes this more evident than ever. Certainly, responding to the September 11 attacks is a delicate matter, requiring careful thought and a degree of tactical and strategic clarity too often absent in American foreign policy. Certainly, too, the attacks provide us with yet another occasion to ponder whether the costs of maintaining an homogenizing, historically oblivious, Wilsonian world empire of abstract human rights outweigh any ostensible benefits, to ourselves or to others. But a high-handed refusal to retaliate, coupled with an endless faith in negotiations and economic pressure, not only belittles the seriousness of the attacks, it—ironically—belittles the depth of anti-American feeling in the world at large, and behind the attacks in particular. Such a refusal says to the world: "The United States is so much better than you, so much stronger than you, so much more morally keen than you, that what any other country would feel as a devastating attack, inspires in us only pity. We are sorry for you, in your benighted fundamentalist rage; you must learn to control yourselves, not to lash out at those who would be your civilizing benefactors. Your hatreds are irrational and misguided: Don't you know that the house of American multiculturalism has many mansions, that a comfortable place for you in the museum has already been set aside?" Is there any real doubt that such an attitude is as arrogant and naive—as historically careless, as infuriating—as any thoughtless "nuke 'em all" hawkishness?

Any serious antiglobalist position must allow for the possibility of disputes—wars—between sovereign entities, and indeed, between sovereign and non-sovereign political groupings—however unsatisfyingly amorphous the latter may be. Without the possibility of such conflict, the normative homogenization of the globe has already been completed.

Hegel, famously, once noted that to punish a criminal straightforwardly for doing wrong is to treat him with more rational respect than to medicalize or otherwise explain his crimes as a result of unpleasant forces beyond his control. A

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similar principle is at work here: A reasoned, well-planned, and limited military action of some sort against whatever limited group is ultimately shown to be responsible for the September 11 attacks is more respectful—to the victims, to the interests of the United States, to the world at large, and even to those behind the attacks—than either an indiscriminate military response or a non-military one. Such a limited response might also be the first step toward a reduction of anti-American feeling—if not at home, then at least abroad.

—*Chad McCracken*

VLADIMIR PUTIN adopted his usual serious demeanor during an October 8 meeting with his "power ministers," the men who head Russian defense and security agencies. The ex-KGB operative grimly noted that the U.S. losses in the September 11 terrorist attacks were "colossal," more than twice that of (official) Russian casualties in the Chechen war. Putin then switched gears: Looking directly into the TV camera, he stated that Russia would stand by her "partners" in the international "antiterrorist coalition" Washington was assembling—but only so far. Only "humanitarian aid" for the suffering Afghans would be allowed to cross Russian airspace. Moreover, Russia would not directly take part in any combat operations in Afghanistan. Otherwise, Moscow would cooperate, offering the coalition what intelligence the Russian "special services" could offer on the Taliban and the situation in Central Asia. Putin thus summed up Russia's position on operation "Enduring Freedom," including, by implication, what Moscow wants from the West in return for the use of Russian airspace and an American presence (temporarily, the Kremlin hopes) in Central Asia.

First, by linking the September 11 attacks to Russia's war in Chechnya, Putin was emphasizing that Moscow wants a free hand in crushing the Chechen separatists, some of whom likely have ties to the Taliban and "terrorist number one," Osama bin Laden.

Second, Moscow is reluctant to take part in any joint U.S.-British operations in Afghanistan: The Russians have their hands full at home (though rumors of Russian "advisors" operating tanks for the anti-Taliban Northern Alliance are circulating in the Russian media).

Third, Russia wants the West, broadly speaking (NATO, the European Union, the WTO, the IMF), to consider Moscow a "partner." Thus, NATO should reconsider its proposed expansion to the east (though Putin had stated earlier that Russia would no longer oppose such moves; not coincidently, Putin has recently stopped mentioning Moscow's opposition to National Missile Defense) and should henceforth make the Kremlin a "partner" in its decisionmaking processes, themes he brought up during his September trip to Germany. While the West was at it, the IMF could reschedule Russian debt and accept Russia into the WTO and the European Union.

The fly in the ointment of rapprochement, however, could be the increasing pressure on the Bush administration from Republican neoconservative hawks, who are demanding a wider war, one that would target Iraq and, possibly, other "rogue states" with whom Moscow has been busily mending post-Cold War fences. Following Washington's hints that a campaign limited to targets in Afghanistan may not be enough to "defeat terrorism," Defense Minister Sergey Ivanov and Kremlin-friendly media were quick to convey Moscow's negative view of a widened conflict. Rumor has it that Putin is already considering Plan B: Seeing the British, too, balking at the prospect of World War III, Putin will hone in on "friend Tony [Blair]" and capitalize on his particularly friendly relations with the Germans, pushing the Kremlin's agenda and simultaneously taking Washington down a notch or two. The ball is now in President Bush's court.

—*Denis Petrov*

SINCE SEPTEMBER 11, I've heard it more than once and will likely hear it again. The argument goes like this: Yes, all this banal talk about Islam being a "religion of peace" is, of course, a lot of nonsense. But the problem is not *their* religion but *all* religion. "Religious" people, you see, are all potentially murderous fanatics since "organized religion" is a (if not *the*) "root cause" of war and repression. People who are "religious" think God speaks to them. They have a book (the Bible, the Koran) and their book tells them they are the "chosen" or the "elect" and that they are to strike down or forcibly convert the infidel. There is little difference, really, between America's evangelical Christians and bin Laden's Islamic fundamentalists. There may be a God, but He is beyond us and far removed from our everyday lives. Anyway, "religion" is a private matter. So goes the standard argument of the postmodern secularist.

The problems with this line of argument are both numerous and obvious. Were Stalin and Hitler, for instance, members of an "organized" religion? If we mean a church in the traditional sense, no: Both headed anti-Christian regimes that rejected the traditional "organized religion" of their respective societies and murdered far more people than any repressive "religious" regimes ever had. So World War II, instigated in large part by these two dictators, was not a "religious" war in the usual sense, the one meant by those who claim traditional "organized religion" is behind most of the evil in the world. If we broaden the definition of "religion" to include political ideologies, then both most certainly were "religious," but so is everybody else, including the zealots who want to crush "organized religion." They are members of their own very well-organized church, the church of the ACLU, the *Washington Post*, and the Democratic Party. Fanatics come in all shapes and sizes, "religious" and otherwise.

One of the chief assumptions of the "organized religion is warlike" argument is that all "organized" religions are fundamentally alike in their aggressiveness. Yes, there have been Christian terrorists (those who have targeted abortionists, for example) and "religious" people have tortured, murdered, and raped throughout history, but I can think of only two religions—Islam and Shinto—whose adherents have exalted the suicide killer as one of the highest expressions of their faith. (How come there aren't any Buddhist suicide bombers targeting Beijing?) As for Christianity and Islam, did Jesus call on his followers to make war on unbelievers? Muhammad did.

The real reason most of these very religious secular zealots bash "organized religion" has little to do with their supposed distaste for slaughter (I doubt many of them would question, say, the bombing of Hiroshima, much less abortion) or repression (many of them championed Vietnam's communists in the 1960's). The real reason is as old as the world and as common as a child's rebellion against his parents. "Organized religion" represents traditional authority. Authority means rules, commandments, duties, and Thou Shalt Nots. And there are the

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sticky—and related—problems of evil and the disappointments and seemingly random tragedies of human existence. Their problem is not with "religion"; their problem is with God.

—*Wayne Allensworth*

SINCE SEPTEMBER 11, I have spent a great deal of time in interviews with all sorts of media people, who range from the well informed to the abysmally ignorant. One question that occurs with deadly predictability concerns the mindset of the terrorists: Just what kind of warped alien creature could possibly crash a plane into the World Trade Center? And, more broadly, what on earth do they hope to achieve by this? Don't they know they can never defeat the United States? As I go through the same explanations time and again, I often wish that there were a handy *Guide to Terrorism* to which I could refer them—a comprehensive *Cliff's Notes*. And then it occurs to me that such a thing *does* exist. Rather than a thousand television chat programs on terrorism, in which experts like myself float their half-baked nostrums, it would be much more useful for American television networks to show just one film—ideally every night for a month or so, until the whole nation can lip-synch the lines. It really is that crucial: When someone has seen and understood the 1966 film *The Battle of Algiers*, they have acquired an expertise in matters of terrorism and counterterrorism far superior to that of virtually all media pundits.

The Battle of Algiers is set in 1957, amidst the anticolonial struggle waged by the Algerian people against their French masters from 1954 to 1962. Though the war began as a rural struggle by the National Liberation Front (the FLN), in 1957 the revolutionaries moved their war into the great capital city. There, they waged a terrifyingly innovative kind of urban guerrilla warfare, characterized by brutal bomb and machine-gun attacks against soldiers, police, and European civilians. This was unashamedly a race war. In response, the French sent in their finest troops, the Paratroopers, who fought the prototype of modern dirty wars using torture, assassination, provocation, and infiltration to destroy the FLN's hitherto devastatingly effective network of insulated cells. By the end of 1957, the Paras had won a decisive victory, and all FLN cells in the city were either destroyed or so thoroughly penetrated that they were under French control. Algiers seemed secure. Nevertheless, in 1960, the revolt broke out again, and Algerian resistance combined with the French failure of political will to permit the creation of a new, independent Arab nation.

To repeat what is normally a publicist's cliché, *The Battle of Algiers* is literally like no other film ever made. It tells the story from the point of view of the terrorists, some of whom are actually played by the real-life senior leaders from the 1957 battle, men and women with much civilian blood on their hands. The film makes no pretense of the militants' innocence and offers no argument that innocent people were only killed in tragic accidents. At the same time, the film makes no attempt to demonize the French—even the Paras. The Para leader, Colonel Mathieu, is portrayed as an attractive figure, a sensitive and cultured man, who realizes that he must fulfill his historic role as the defender of capitalism in terminal crisis. Most astonishingly, this pro-terrorist film celebrates a battle in which—at least to non-ideologues—the terrorists seem to lose decisively. The film provides a detailed manual for how to defeat a terrorist movement, which supplies the precise model and precursor for the Islamist cells currently operating in New Jersey and New York and—who knows—maybe in every state of the union. Every federal and city agency should own a copy of the film.

Once you have seen *The Battle of Algiers*, you have learned a great many things, which is why the film has, for 30 years, been used as a training text for both urban guerrillas and countersubversive forces. For our present purposes, it is most informative in what it tells us about concepts of defeat and victory. The FLN guerrillas in the film know that they are going to die and that their cause will fail in the short term—indeed, the film begins and ends by showing a decisive French victory, as the Paras root out the last effective cells in the Algiers Casbah. Yet the guerrillas have faith in the future—not in a Muslim paradise (these terrorists are secular socialist nationalists) but in the idealized vision of a general rising of a radicalized people, inspired by the heroism of their revolutionary suicide. The guerrillas know implicitly that death leads to victory, a lesson internalized by all subsequent generations of European and Middle Eastern terrorists who cut their teeth on this film. If you want to understand the "terrorist mindset," watch this film, which might be one of the most influential works of cinema ever made.

—*Philip Jenkins*

OBITER DICTA: Now is the time to update your passport and make plans to join *Chronicles* editors **Thomas Fleming**, **Scott P. Richert**, and **Andrei Navrozov**, as well as The Rockford Institute's executive vice president, **Christopher Check**, in **Toscana**, Italia, for The Rockford Institute's next international Convivium, "Tuscany: The Cultural Free Market," March 11-20, 2002. Witness firsthand the remnants of the great incarnational cultures of Pisa, Siena, Florence, and Lucca. See the back cover for details.

In Clyde Wilson's review "Confederate Rainbow" (October), Bill Gates' overzealous word processor tried to rewrite history, changing the title of Nancy Lusignan Schultz's nook, which should have read *Fire and Roses: The Burning of the* **Charlestown** *Convent, 1834*. The editors regret the error.

Lawrence Dugan, a librarian who lives in Philadelphia, has contributed two poems this month. Mr. Dugan's poetry has appeared in numerous national and international publications, including the *New Republic*, *Southern Review*, the *Spectator*, *Encounter*, *Commonweal*, *Tar River Poetry*, *Irish Edition*, *Poetry Australia*, *First Things*, and the 20th anniversary issue of *Poetry East*.

Our inside illustrations this month are provided by our art director, **H. Ward Sterett** of Roscoe, Illinois. Mr. Sterett received his B.F.A. from the University of Colorado and his M.F.A. from Northern Illinois University and attended the L'Abri Fellowship, where he studied the effect of Christianity on art. He currently works as a sculptor, painter, and printmaker in Roscoe. Our cover, an exquisite example of incarnational art, is a reproduction of the *Virgin and Child with Angels* by Sienese artist **Sano di Pietro** (1406-1481). The original, crafted in tempera and gold on wood, is part of the James Parmelee Collection at the Cleveland Museum of Art, which graciously allowed us to use it.

Chronicles is back on the newsstand and, in the great state of **Arkansas**, can be found at the Books-A-Million stores in **Covington**, 401 North U.S. Highway 190, and **Columbia**, 4840 Forrest Drive; and at the Bookland stores in **Columbus** at the Leigh Mall, and **Corinth**, 802 Cass Street.

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Chronicles' Back Issues, Tapes, and Books

* Christmas Past *

OLD TIME RELIGION: TRADITION & FUNDAMENTALS—December 2000— Thomas Fleming charts the path from tradition to annihilation, Harold O.J. Brown examines the tension between revelation and tradition, Philip Jenkins predicts the future of traditional Christianity, and Steven Wilkins explains how the American South kept covenant with God. Plus Alberto Carosa on the life of Blessed Pope Pius IX.
Back Issue #: T00& **$7.00**

CHRISTOS Y2K: CHOOSE YOUR MILLENNIUM—December 1999—Thomas Fleming on the new religions of dinosaurs, AIDS, and race, Philip Jenkins on how Matthew Shepard replaced Jesus Christ, and Harold O.J. Brown on the coming of the Third Age. Plus Jeffrey Meyers on traveling through Jamaica, Janet Scott Barlow on the *New York Times* and compassion, and an exposé of the Russian banking scandal.
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HEALING THE SCHISM—December 1998—Father Hugh Barbour lays the ground for an anti-ecumenical ecumenism, Harold O.J. Brown presents the Protestant view of church unity, and Wayne Allensworth explains what's wrong with Western evangelism in Russia. Plus Thomas Fleming on ecumenism, universalism, and empire and Samuel Francis on paleo-Malthusianism.
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NATION UNDER GOD—December 1997—Thomas Fleming praises intolerance, D. George Leech outlines a Christian foreign policy, William A. Donohue discusses anti-Catholicism (the last respectable bias), Llewellyn H. Rockwell, Jr., shows why the Christian right needs Econ. 101, and Harold O.J. Brown questions the ethics of the clergy. Plus Cliff Kincaid on how Jesse Helms saved the United Nations.
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SACRAMENTS, ANTI-SACRAMENTS—December 1996—Thomas Fleming on Uncle Sam as the anti-Christ, Father Ian Boyd on the sacraments as perceived by G.K. Chesterton and Muriel Spark, Harold O.J. Brown on the sacraments of death, E. Christian Kopff on the catechisms of public education, and Philip Jenkins on teaching religion vs. religious teaching.
Back Issue #: T96& **$7.00**

KEEPING THE FAITH: LIFE IN POST-CHRISTIAN AMERICA—December 1994—Philip Jenkins on the radicalism in the Episcopal Church, Thomas Fleming on the case for religious boycotts, Thomas Molnar on the National Conference of Catholic Bishops, and John Patrick Zmirak on AIDS and the wrath of God. Plus Jacob Neusner on the left's hijacking of Judaism and Sanford Pinsker on affirmative action and the Lubavitcher Rebbe.
Back Issue #: T94& **$7.00**

"OVERCOMING THE SCHISM" COLLECTORS' SET—Four Audiotapes and two Back Issues—This collection includes the taped proceedings of the May 1998 *Chronicles* conference, "Overcoming the Schism" (tape #s RCE1, RCE2, RCE3, RCE4, RCE5, and RCE6), the December 1998 issue of *Chronicles* (back issue #T98&), and a photocopy of the February 1999 issue of *Chronicles* (out of print). A savings of $19.00.
Set #: RCES **$70.00**

THE PERENNIAL CHESTERTON—Audiotape—Fr. Ian Boyd will increase your appreciation of G.K. Chesterton with this insightful and humorous lecture. Drawing from a wide selection of Chesterton's work and correspondence, Fr. Boyd shows us that Chesterton was right about (among other things) contraception, the Anglo war machine, the culture of advertising, and the destructive effect of liberal theology on the Church.
Tape #: RDS9 **$12.50**

THE MEDJUGORJE DECEPTION—Audiotape—For over 15 years, *Culture Wars* editor E. Michael Jones has researched the supposed Marian apparitions at Medjugorje, Bosnia. Following the biblical injunction, "By their fruits, ye shall know them," Dr. Jones exposes the web of deceit and fraud surrounding Medjugorje. In a remarkable lecture, Dr. Jones reveals how outward piety can mask diabolical intentions.
Tape #: RDL2 **$12.50**

CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE, THE FAMILY, AND CIVILIZATION—Audiotape—Was Saint Paul a misogynist? Or does his warning to the Ephesians, "Let wives be subject to their husbands," contain the prescription for a just and ordered society based on Christian marriage and separate but complementary sex roles? Fr. Paul Check examines St. Paul's teaching through the work of St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, and C.S. Lewis.
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IMPERIAL PRESIDENCY—October 1997—Patrick J. Buchanan on Mr. Lincoln's War, Samuel Francis on the demise of checks and balances, Llewellyn Rockwell, Jr., on executive branch evils, and Donald Livingston and Thomas Naylor on the real meaning of the Pledge of Allegiance. Plus Thomas Fleming on how presidents became our masters and Marian Kester Coombs on the attempt to feminize mathematics.
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The Tower of Skulls

by Thomas Fleming

"You've never been to Nish?!" My friend was incredulous. How can someone who has traveled, it sometimes seems, every inch of Montenegro, Bosnia, and Kosovo not have found the time to go to Nish? The lady is far from being a local chauvinist, but when I first met her and asked (as I had been taught by a Belgrader) if she was "*iz Nish*"—leaving off the genitive ending, as they do sometimes near the Bulgarian border—she exclaimed, "Oh, those people in Belgrade. They think they know everything." In fact, as she later explained, the Nish dialect is a little strange. The accent falls forward on words, and many Turkish expressions remain within the local vernacular as a memorial to 500 years of occupation.

Why *not* go to Nish? Dr. Johnson's observation that every human life is worth a biography applies to cities as well. This little city in southeastern Serbia was a major stop on the route to Byzantium. Constantine's family came from Nish (or rather, Naissus), and that first Christian emperor was actually born there. It was in Nish that Stefan Nemanja, the founder of the Serbian royal dynasty of the Middle Ages, met with Barbarossa, who was on his way to the Crusade. The Turks first took the city in 1385 but lost it again to the Serbs and did not reconquer it for good until 1454. When I go, I shall be able to visit the Turkish citadel built on the site of a Byzantine fort. I can also see a church that is not much taller than a man's height—Islamic law forbade the erection of a Christian church higher than a Muslim building. It is a nice memorial of the kindness and benevolence of Muslims who rule over Christian subjects.

An even more impressive monument to the Turks is the Cele Kula—the tower of skulls. In 1809, during Karageorge's uprising against the Turks, the Serbs under the command of Stjepan Sindjelic made a last stand in a fortified powder magazine. When all hope was exhausted, Sindjelic let the Turks into the fort and touched off the powder, killing himself, his men, and all the Turks. There was no other way. In revenge, the Turks built a tower out of the Christian skulls.

Dr. Johnson's respect for the individual human life applies to all human beings, but only Christians can grasp the implication. Each life is precious, being made in the image of the God who sent His Son as a man, to enjoy the life of this earth, resist its temptations, and die to give us "life and that more abundantly." In the older sections of Christendom, every spot, virtually, is marked by a martyr's grave, and there is hardly a day in the year that does not commemorate a saint. I am beginning this essay in late September, and tomorrow, for example, is the feast of Our Lady of Ransom, who inspired Saint Peter Nolasco in 1223 to establish the Mercedarian Order for ransoming Christians who had fallen into the hands of the Muslims.

In October, the feast of Our Lady nf the Rosary recalls the battle of Lepanto, when the Christian naval forces of Don John of Austria trounced the Turks on October 7, 1571—a victory to set beside Marathon and Salamis, Rome's defeat of Carthage, Charles Martel's repulse of the Moors in the Pyrenees, and Leo III's defense of Constantinople from an almost fatal Muslim attack in 725. On the seventh, I board a plane for Rome, where a few days later I attend a celebration, organized by the Centro Culturale Lepanto, commemorating the Christian victory. Scattered among the prelates and scholars in the audience are descendants of noble Romans who took part in the battle, which took the lives of thousands of Christian soldiers and sailors but liberated even more thousands from slavery in Turkish galleys.

Christianity is often lumped together with Islam as one of the world's great monotheisms. Christians certainly believe, as they were taught by the Jewish prophets and Greek philosophers, that God is one, but they have had to grapple with the problem of a God whose divine Son came down to earth and became a man. The disciples of Jesus could not have stated the matter more precisely than that; over the years, however, as some heretics overemphasized Christ's divinity and oneness with the Father, and others focused more exclusively on his humanity, the doctrine of the Holy Trinity took shape. The familiar expression—three persons of one substance—may seem an arid formula, but it encapsulates a life-and-death struggle for Christian sanity that cost the lives of orthodox martyrs and sincere heretics. To the extent that we are Christian, we are Trinitarian; to the extent that we lapse into Arianism or monophysitism, we are heretical, and if a church is willing to tolerate Unitarians within its ranks, it had best give up the pretense of Christianity, if only for the sake of truth in advertising.

A series of Church councils established the position of catholic orthodoxy, but no sooner had the church settled the major issues of Christ's nature from within than the Unitarian demon attacked from without. When Christian theologians first made the acquaintance of Islam, they interpreted it as a Christian heresy. Islam is an eclectic hodgepodge (something like Bahai or the Unification Church), and Muhammad did at times try to appeal to Christians by portraying himself as a reformer of their religion. Though he lacked the intellectual rigor and erudition of an Arius, his rage against the Incarnation was far more violent.

Muhammad and his followers were nothing if not violent against every human pretension to be made in the image of God or to love a God who took on the image of man. Muslims were as zealous in shattering images of Christ and His saints as they were in slaughtering the human beings who worshipped Christ as God. The infection was contagious, and it was not long before the soldier-emperors (including the great Leo III) who defended Christendom from Muslim armies picked up

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the same rage. Although iconoclasm was eventually condemned at the Seventh Ecumenical Council, the rabies has never been eliminated. The Bogomils, Cathars, and Albigensians were not only unsound on the Trinity and enemies of the established order of the Church, but many went as far astray in the practices of everyday life as the Anabaptists who embraced some of their heresies. Deny the images that reflect the Incarnation, it seems, and you will go on to reject marriage and private property and all decent order.

This is not to say that I agree with a friend of mine, a convert to Orthodoxy, who once told me that there is no salvation for those who do not venerate icons. But, if I have to fall into one extreme or another, I had rather be superstitious than irreverent. I can say with the Anglican Thomas Browne that I love "the civility of hat and hand," because it is not only through icons that Christians display their respect for the human flesh that God created and Christ deigned to sanctify. Christian worship is not purely cerebral, but a complex system of organized physical gestures: standing, sitting, bowing, kneeling, and prostrating; sprinkling, censing, anointing, and breaking. Unitarians have almost entirely succeeded in eliminating the ritual element from their comical services, but they are not nearly half so Christian as the average Muslim. (Better a foolish Turk, Luther should have said, than a Unitarian with a Ph.D.)

Wherever Christians are, there you will find the Cross, and wherever Muslims are in charge, they will make war upon it. During the Gulf War, when our soldiers were stationed in Saudi Arabia, presumably, to save the Saudis' bacon (or, rather, their goat), U.S. military chaplains were forbidden to display the Cross or even to carry a Bible with a Cross emblazoned on the cover. Perhaps it is a good thing the South did not conquer the North, since the Cross of St. Andrews on the Confederate flag would have caused problems with our Muslim allies. (Or is that one more proof that the South was right?)

How few flags today actually include a Cross—or anything meaningful! Riding past a display of flags on the way into Rome from Fiumicino Airport, I cannot help observing that nearly all of them were variations on the flag of the French Revolution, including the Italian flag, which Umberto Bossi had the bad taste to describe as "*la drappa jacobina*." The British Union Jack is, of course, made up of the Cross of St. Andrew superimposed upon the Cross of St. George, and as I stare at it, I see the stripes of the British Cross unwind themselves and straighten out into alternating red and white stripes—the perfect symbol for a Unitarian state.

A few days later, I find myself in Pisa, visiting the church of St. Stefano, designed by Vasari and built as a Tuscan naval chapel for the Medici's Knights of St. Stefano, who were supposed to be naval crusaders against the Turks. Painted on the ceiling of St. Stefano is a series of oil paintings depicting Christian naval victories over the Muslims, and all along the upper part of the walls is a procession of captured Turkish naval standards. I am puzzled by about a dozen of them that I take to be our own Stars and Stripes until I realize there are no stars and notice that each flagpole is topped by a Turkish crescent. Then I remember seeing these very flags when I first visited the church over ten years ago. On that occasion, the resemblance of Old Glory to a Turkish battle flag seemed amusing, but less so today, as the United States is bent on building its own Ottoman Empire in the Balkans and the Middle East.

At best, the Stars and Stripes signify nothing more lofty than the power of the unitary state (the 50 stars—another favorite Turkish device—representing the states are a cruel joke). The Cross, however, is no mere historic accident. If Christ had come in the 20th century, we should not have stuck—as the joke has it—an image of an electric chair on top of church steeples. The Cross was, indeed, an inverted image of shame, but its symbolic properties have been the subject of meditation for better Christians than I am.

The Cross is, most obviously, a tree—albeit manmade—and thus refers not only to the prophecy of a savior hanged upon a tree but also to the Tree of Life. The vertical axis runs from Hell to Heaven, as St. John Chrysostom observed: "The cross uprooted us from the depths of evil and elevates us to the summit of virtue." The horizontal axis, however, stretches out to encompass the earth in its embrace. If the ends of each axis were joined, they would form two circles, but although circles are a perfect shape in themselves, they are closed and exclusive, whereas the Cross of Christ is open to all who will take it up.

Those who can bear this Tree of Life cannot fail entirely to appreciate life. To protect innocent life, Christians may have to kill enemy soldiers in a war or execute murderers, but they may never deliberately take an innocent life, no matter how noble the purpose is, whether it is keeping soldiers out of harm's way by bombing civilians or ensuring a "quality of life" by killing unborn children. The abortionist and his patient, the terror bombers of Dresden, the Nazi and communist butchers—if any of them had been Christian, they would have acknowledged their sin and repented publicly. If there are "Christians" who wish to defend, say, the pilot of the *Enola Gay* or the officers who ordered the missile and bombing attacks on Yugoslavia, they have eliminated themselves in advance from the Christian argument as effectively as if they had administered a retroactive abortion to their mothers.

President Bush is perfectly correct to say that this struggle is no clash of religions and civilizations, and the establishment's repeated declarations that Islam is a religion of peace have the effect of erasing whatever line in the sand had been drawn between our two worlds. The Muslims, it is true, are continuing to build their towers of skulls, most recently at the World Trade Center, but the United States is building its own monuments in Afghanistan. An even nominally Christian America would be declaring a new crusade, not against "terrorism" (a proposition as abstract as poverty or drugs) but against Islam. At the same time, we would be treating our enemies and their families and neighbors as creatures made in the image of God. We would, of course, be sending in our warriors to do battle with the Taliban, but though civilians would certainly be killed, either by accident or in revenge, there would be no villages mistakenly wiped out by high-altitude bombing.

Burke lamented the passing of the Age of Chivalry. I mourn the exit of Christianity from the world's stage, the final disappearance of Christendom. Go look for it somewhere in Middle Earth or in Faery, but not on *this* earth in *this* time. In such an age, it is unreasonable to look for Christian statesmen or to criticize the unbelieving politicians who are forced to make difficult decisions by the light of what human reason they have, but it is up to Christians, the exiled children of Eve who do so much good work testifying to their reverence for life in unborn children, to bear witness both to the exclusive truth of their faith and to their respect for the lives of people living under the terrible moral and spiritual darkness that is Islam.

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Relations

by Lawrence Dugan

Families arriving at the zoo
Know by some instinct what to do:
Parents lead till daughter lingers
Watching monkey count his fingers,
Finding four, or six, or dozens
If the count includes his cousins . . .
And then those people start to stare
As if the monkey's heart were bare!
Across the crease of solemn face
The ancient wisdom of our race
Seems so suddenly upon them
They could swear they really know him . . .
When his hairy brow is furrowed
Uncle Lenny might have burrowed
To some sagacious by-gone age
When men like him were in a cage;
Should some gorilla take a drink
It's enough to make them think
He contemplates Dad's latest plan
To phone the beer-delivery man.
The fellow staggers to his feet,
It's Mr. Stumbles up the street . . .
Who spoils all their speculation
Looking thoughtful—no relation.

DICTATIONS

God Bless America

Every president since Ronald Reagan has employed this invocation to punctuate the conclusion of a major speech. Coming from Reagan, it was sort of a tip of the hat to the official pieties of the World War II generation. In the mouth of Bill Clinton it was a blasphemy. Now, the phrase is on the lips of people who, as the joke used to go, think "Damn" is God's last name.

Such prayers—"God grant, or bless, or give"—represent a fossilized survival of the subjunctive. Presumably, we are asking the Creator to give his blessing to the people and the government of the United States. At first sight, it seems a bit much: This is a country that encourages the infanticide of 15 million children a decade and forbids prayer in public schools and tears down manger scenes from town squares. Who is the God we are appealing to? Astarte? Or, perhaps, her latter-day incarnation worshipped in the Middle East?

The New England Puritan fathers believed that their New Jerusalem would be favored by God above all other nations, and although only the tiniest fraction of Americans have ever followed Puritan theology (much less attempted to live by it), the official ideology of the United States has certainly incorporated the secular version of their faith in the form of American exceptionalism, the theory that America has somehow escaped the limitations of human nature, that (in the words of Madeleine Albright) "we see farther."

The phrase "God bless America" comes from the title of a popular song written by Irving Berlin, who—whatever his other merits—did not share the religion of most Americans. Named Israel Baline by his father, a well-known cantor in Russia, he changed his name soon after his arrival in the United States. According to some acquaintances, Mr. Berlin tried hard to escape from his Jewish identity. Unlike Jews who became American without jettisoning their language, culture, and religion, Berlin became a generic American writing generic music. A secular songsmith, he wrote "White Christmas" as the nonreligious alternative to the old carols and supplied "God Bless America" as a replacement for the atavistic "My Country, 'tis of Thee."

The presidents may be right. The vulgar jingle of a non-believing immigrant *is* the proper anthem for the New America that regards the Creator of the universe as a giant slot machine: Stick in enough coins for long enough, and you're bound to hit the jackpot, regardless of who you are or what you've done. Writing in 1952 of the devastation wrought by both sides in the Korean War, Bernard Iddings Bell ascribed the "liquidation" of civilians to a lack of Christian love: "So will it be, or worse," he warned, "in every land including ours, when modern war is waged therein."

—Humpty Dumpty

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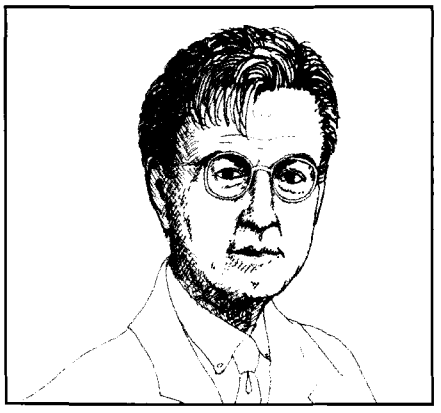
by Philip Jenkins

Shadow of Ecstasy



It's starting again. Almost 20 years ago, the federal government launched what became known as the "war on drugs," a radical experiment to suppress illegal drugs through harsh penal solutions. Among other things, this meant long prison sentences for the sale or possession of tiny quantities of controlled substances, sentences that are astonishingly severe by the standards of virtually all other advanced nations. Moreover, these sentences were imposed under strict federal and state guidelines that all but eliminated the discretion of individual judges. The drug war had other delightful features, including giving the Drug Enforcement Administration a major say over what medicines and anaesthetics could be prescribed by doctors or hospitals.

We now have more than enough perspective to declare the drug war an abject failure—nothing less than a catastrophe visited upon American society. The worst aspect of the whole affair is that there cannot literally be a war on drugs: Teams of agents do not take sharp sticks and punish rows of marijuana plants. Instead, the war is on people—American people—and overwhelmingly, the victims of antidrug campaigns are quite ordinary and fairly harmless individuals. Nevertheless, millions of lives have been destroyed in the name of the unattainable principle of social purity. The main beneficiaries of the drug war have been criminal-justice bureaucrats, especially prison administrators and employees. (Just look at the amazing clout of the prison guards' union in California state politics.) It beggars belief that a policy that shifts so much power into the hands of the state bureaucracy originated with politicians who would have described themselves as "conservatives."

At least we now know enough never to make the same mistakes again, right? Guess again. As in every example of state repression throughout history, the mere fact of eliminating the opposition does not slake the official thirst for blood. Time and again over the last 20 years, antidrug authorities have declared victory after victory, destroying this or that "cartel," seizing or killing supposed kingpins—often in circumstances of dubious legality—and alleged drug "epidemics" have appeared and vanished. Drug usage in the United States has been reduced as far as it conceivably can be by a total war based on police and prisons. The statistics will not go lower. Most of the really serious drugs, especially heroin and cocaine, have been reduced to marginal dimensions, and we face nothing like the widespread experimentation of the 1960's and 70's. By any rational standard, we should be celebrating a famous victory, but of course we are not. Unlike real wars, the so-called drug war has no natural ending, no moment when the enemy fleet is destroyed or a capital city placed under occupation. When one phase ends, another begins. Since the collapse of the national panic over crack cocaine in the 1990's, the antidrug bureaucrats have lived in a state of deep concern and have had to strive ever harder to produce plausible new menaces to justify their continued existence. Some of their efforts have been simply ludicrous: Who remembers the drug methcathinone (CAT), which, for several months in 1993, was proclaimed to be the next national drug epidemic?

Happily, though, in the last two years, a solution has been found in the pharmaceutical MDMA, popularly known as "Ecstasy," which is now scheduled to be "the next crack cocaine." Many medical authorities have nothing but praise for MDMA, which, properly used, has enormous potential in psychiatric practice, to the extent that some have called it a "penicillin of the soul." It allows people to confront traumatic memories without fear, and the substance has basically no bad side effects, provided it is used with adequate ventilation and water. Tragically, though, in our present social environment, MDMA has other worrying features, since it makes people feel very happy, confident, and affectionate—so they use it recreationally. And any chemical that makes people feel good must, in this land of Carrie Nation, be a dangerous drug that demands suppression.

Since 1999, the antidrug agencies have steadily cultivated scare stories about Ecstasy that rely on the familiar rhetorical tactic of confusing the consequences of its legal prohibition with the effects of the substance itself. For instance, Ecstasy use literally *never* causes violence: At worst, it causes users to grin in a silly fashion and declare undying love for all around them. Yet, when it is prohibited, people use it in clandestine settings where they can suffer from the deprivation of fresh air and water. Users can thus suffer and die, and the news stories declare that Ecstasy is a "killer drug," and "death to kids." Moreover, if the substance is illegal, then those seeking it must resort to underground channels to obtain supplies. This brings in organized-crime elements, who tend to kill one another to secure their market share. Thus, we find idiotic headlines like one that appeared in the *New York Times* this summer: "Violence Rises as Club Drug Spreads Out Into the Streets" (June 24). Armed with such misinformation about this "killer drug," legislators then leap into action, imposing draconian penalties for sale or possession. Under new federal sentencing guidelines, Ecstasy use is now penalized *five times* more severely than heroin use, in terms of the potential prison sentence. As a result, everyone is happy; especially the DEA agents, who don't have to find new jobs, and the prison officials, whose pensions are secure.

In 2000, I appeared before a committee of the U.S. House of Representatives that was holding hearings on Ecstasy and other so-called "club drugs." To say the least, I was in the minority among the witnesses—I was so surrounded by hostile cops and pols that I think I now have a much better sense of how General Custer felt. I concluded my presentation with a warning that, as Congress attempted to offer protection from Ecstasy, it would "enact new prohibitions and criminal justice-related policies which will result in causing more harm, more injury and death." Subsequent events make these dangers all the more likely. I would love to believe that there is still time to turn back. We do not have to continue down the road into the next phase of a never-ending drug war. c

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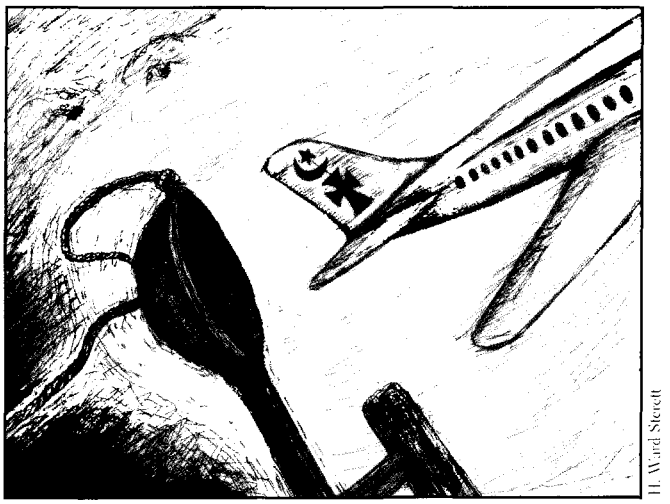
Causes and Catapults

The Incarnation and Its Enemies

by Philip Jenkins



H. Ward Sterett

For over a thousand years, Western civilization was defined by the shifting religious frontier between Christianity and Islam, and the Muslim religion was the ultimate enemy. Whenever Western Christians wished to condemn a person or a movement, the obvious tactic was to compare it to Islam. When a medieval French king wanted to justify his bloody plunder of the order of Knights Templar, he claimed (falsely) that the knights worshiped a sinister pagan idol called Baphomet, a simple mangling of the name of "Mahomet." In Stuart England, orthodox Christians faced a rationalist challenge from skeptical Deists, and they replied in the traditional manner by accusing their critics of being closet Muslims. As a piece of scholarly name-calling, it is difficult to beat Humphrey Prideaux's *Life of Mahomet* (1697), more fully *The True Nature of Imposture Fully Display'd in the Life of Mahomet . . . Offered to the Consideration of the Deists of the Present Age*.

Anti-Muslim rhetoric is nothing new for Western society, but within the past century, some distinguished Christian thinkers have explored the full significance of that chasm between the Cross and the Crescent. After all, just looking at the countless wars between the two sides, there is remarkably little to choose between them in terms of the saints and villains each produced. Even in the era of the Crusades, it was the Muslims who produced, in Saladin, the true *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche*. In modern times, it was the highly technological Christian states that inflicted the most horrendous brutalities upon their coreligionist neighbors. This question of distinctions troubled the great Anglican poet and theologian Charles Williams, who dealt with the war between Christians and pagans in his Arthurian epic cycle *The Region of the Summer Stars*. In one poem ("The Prayers of the Pope"), the pope asks in his prayers: "Where is the difference between us? / What does the line along the rivers define? / Causes and catapults they have and we have, / And the death of a brave beauty is mutual everywhere." Is it all just a matter of politics, of causes and catapults? Or of who has the most rifles, the best Cruise missiles?

As so often, the best answer to our theological dilemmas may be found in the work of G.K. Chesterton, that remarkable and many-sided writer who, as time goes on, increasingly looks like one of the most important minds of the 20th century. For Chesterton, Christians and Muslims were divided by one simple fact, namely, the Incarnation. The notion that God, the Creator of the Universe, had taken human form, had lived, and died, and was resurrected on earth, was not just one theological point among many: It was the rock upon which all subsequent doctrines and beliefs were founded, including such basic notions as human dignity. Incarnation was not just a truth, but The Truth. As Chesterton wrote in *Orthodoxy*, "having found the moral atmosphere of the Incarnation to be common sense, I then looked at the established intellectual arguments against the Incarnation and found them to be common nonsense."

Christians believe in the fact of the Incarnation; Muslims do not; and, therefore, there can ultimately be no compromise between the two. Ideally, Christians and Muslims might well live together in harmony, exercise charity toward one another, and hold intelligent and thoughtful debates—in short, they might act like civilized human beings; but the two worldviews will always be utterly different, and it is absurd to pretend otherwise. There will also be insuperable obstacles to what is optimistically described as "interfaith dialogue," since such a process can only advance by having one side abandon its most fundamental beliefs. Chesterton was appropriately amused at the notion that Christmas represented an amiable and uncontroversial face of Christianity, a happy ecumenical festival when those of differ-

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ent faiths might come together in harmony, perhaps to watch school plays or see children unwrap presents. He recognized that the whole underlying doctrine of Christmas was the most stark, uncompromising, and vaunting assertion of the core Christian idea, *Verbum caro factum est*. This is scandal to Jews, folly to Greeks—and unspeakably horrible blasphemy to Muslims. The Koran devotes a whole chapter or *sura* to having Jesus Himself condemn this appalling doctrine.

Chesterton knew enough of the history of the two religions to understand how very closely related their ideas were, how intimate the two sisters had once been, and this very closeness goes far toward explaining the irreconcilable hatred between Christianity and Islam in their mature years. He argued that Christianity itself had always contained a powerful element of world-denying Idealism, which derived ultimately from Platonism, and he believed (not impossibly) that Islam might itself have grown out of this rival tradition. As he argued in his great biography of St. Thomas Aquinas,

> the Greek element in Christian theology tended more and more to be a sort of dried-up Platonism; a thing of diagrams and abstractions; to the last indeed noble abstractions, but not sufficiently touched by that great thing that is by definition almost the opposite of abstraction: Incarnation. Their Logos was the Word; but not the Word made Flesh. In a thousand very subtle ways, often escaping doctrinal definition, this spirit spread over the world of Christendom from the place where the Sacred Emperor sat under his golden mosaics; and the flat pavement of the Roman Empire was at last a sort of smooth pathway for Mahomet. For Islam was the ultimate fulfillment of the Iconoclasts.

In another direction, that anti-incarnational Idealism would flower into the progressive utopianism of the Enlightenment and, subsequently, into modern liberalism. And, as we will see, Chesterton would argue that this seemingly secular tradition would never quite lose its kinship with Islam.

Accepting the Incarnation transforms our understanding of matter, of the created world, which should be seen as a sacramental reality. Christians have thus achieved astonishing success in the visual arts, which reach their greatest heights in images of Christ and, especially, of the Virgin Mary; Muslims, however, eschew all such images. The division between the two religions is symbolized by their respective portrayals of Jesus Himself. In Islamic tradition, Jesus is the focus of countless tales and scriptural passages, which always represent Him as a fierce ascetic who renounced all in the pursuit of God. When the devil taunted the Muslim Jesus for using a stone for a pillow, He threw away the stone, renouncing His last luxury, and slept on bare ground instead. Also, "the day that Jesus was raised to heaven, he left nothing behind but a woolen garment, a slingshot, and two sandals." The Christian Jesus, on the other hand—Who is, of course, a far better documented figure—seemed to enjoy wine, spurned pious niceties, and delighted in the company of women. It is difficult to imagine any sane host inviting the Muslim Jesus to the wedding feast at Cana.

For Chesterton, Islam was "essentially a simple creed for simple men," characterized by an "isolated and simplified deity." Because of its neglect of the Incarnation, it was, above all, unbalanced. As Chesterton wrote in *The Everlasting Man*, "The truth is that Islam itself was a barbaric reaction against that very humane complexity that is really a Christian character; that idea of balance in the deity, as of balance in the family, that makes that creed a sort of sanity, and that sanity the soul of civilisation." Islam was founded upon a great denial of matter, a *gran rifiuto* perfectly symbolized by its rejection of wine and alcohol. These were things which a Christian should see as good and redeemed, intended by God to promote human pleasure and conviviality. To quote a verse of Hilaire Belloc: "Wherever the Catholic sun does shine / There's music and laughter and good red wine / Or I have always heard it so— / *Benedicamus Domino*." The Muslim rejection of this kind of pleasure was a form of world-denial that almost constituted blasphemy in its own right. In Christian terms, it was certainly heresy.

Chesterton was doubly alarmed to find that the Muslim rejection of wine—with all that it implied—was echoed by many good and rational non-Muslims in the early 20th century, those Christians and secular liberals who championed the prohibition of alcohol. Worse, those reformers were trying to remodel human behavior to eliminate the taste for wine—and often, they tried to impose their puritanical standards by seeking to eliminate meat. Tellingly, the progressives were also the ones who rejected the Incarnation and espoused a liberal Christianity that lacked such ideas as the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection. Chesterton argued that their political follies could only be understood in light of their deviant Christology.

In a striking imaginative leap, Chesterton used the symbol of the war against wine to present what might be described as the secular Islamicization of contemporary England and (by implication) the United States. One of his least-known novels is his bizarre 1914 work *The Flying Inn*, in which he depicts a near-future England in which secular progressives are riding high. (The book has just been reissued by Dover.) The progressives hope to create a well-organized utopia, free of the curse of alcohol and purified from the horrors of (Christian) religious fanaticism. Then as now, the term "religious fanaticism" was defined as the obviously irrational idea that religious belief should make any difference to everyday conduct, especially when such amended conduct might cause any personal convenience to the believer or to those near him or her. If Christians behaved according to their lights, then they were *ipso facto* dissidents, who needed to have their personalities modified to conform to contemporary secular mores. So, too, did those bizarre and troublesome eccentrics who foil the schemes of social engineering by creating the "flying inn" of the title and organizing hit-and-run attacks that permit ordinary citizens to obtain their necessary booze and pub food. In the face of such depraved monsters, no official measures were too severe.

Chesterton's point was that the humanistic campaign for progress, science, and reason was itself a kind of fanaticism that had its own powerfully religious quality. He is often quoted as saying that "When Man stops believing in God, he doesn't then believe in nothing, he believes anything," but this quote proves elusive in his writings, and it may represent a collage of several of his apothegms. What he actually *did* write in his 1924 story "The Miracle of Moon Crescent" was that "You hard-shelled materialists were all balanced on the very edge of belief—of belief in almost anything." Justified by their dogmatic credulity, the social engineers of *The Flying Inn* inflict a dictatorship worse than anything attempted in the name of orthodox religion, using draconian police powers to root out dissent. And liberal secularism finds its culmination in the purest form of world-denying fanaticism—Islam.

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The amazing thing about the novel is that the ideological transformation from progressive to Muslim is accomplished so convincingly that we can readily accept it. One of Chesterton's most striking characters is the progressive prohibitionist Philip, Lord Ivywood, the naive aristocrat who leads the campaign against wine and social nonconformity: He espouses all the faddish causes of his day, including vegetarianism and theosophy, and is, in short, the very model of a modern New Age general. He represents that old patrician intellectual lineage that traces back through the Enlightenment to the thought-world of Plato's guardians. And he is clearly meant to be a thoroughly pernicious, subversive force, the deadly ivy on the native oak, which in turn symbolizes the authentic Europe:

> But Ivywood, Lord Ivywood,
> He rots the tree as ivy would,
> He clings and crawls as ivy would
> About the sacred tree.
>
> But Ivywood, Lord Ivywood,
> He hates the tree as ivy would,
> As the dragon of the ivy would
> That has us in his grips.

Ivywood moves neatly from representing the voice of Fabian or progressive idealism—the world of H.G. Wells or Bertrand Russell—to becoming a tool of organized Islam, which uses him as a convenient front man for the annexation of England. In the multicultural dream that he advocates, the two religions will merge to form a new synthesis ("Something called Chrislam, perhaps," glowers one disenchanted rebel). A Cross-Crescent hybrid appears on St. Paul's Cathedral (the "Croscent"), and the Koran is to be integrated into a revised Bible.

Increasingly, it becomes obvious that prohibitionism and progress are Trojan horses for full-scale Islamicization. Though ostensibly an account of the triumph of progress, the plot resolves itself into a struggle between the only two intellectual forces that have ever mattered in the world—those who accept the Incarnation and those who reject it. The two forces clashed bloodily at Tours in 732, at Constantinople in 717 and again in 1453, and now they meet once more on a battlefield in a not-quite-yet England. "There, encamped in the English meadows . . . was something that had never been in camp nearer than some leagues south of Paris, since that Carolus called the Hammer broke it backwards at Tours." In the last great battle, the struggle that saves England for the Incarnation, Lord Ivywood stands on the field under the banner of Islam, dressed "in a uniform of his own special creation, a compromise between the Sepoy and Turkish uniform." All pretense of humanistic secularism is gone. After the Muslim forces are routed, he retreats into a baffled insanity, as Christendom gains the field. He is lost in the fantasy world of those who try to create utopias without taking account of human and divine realities. He cries, "I have gone where God has never dared to go. I am above the silly Supermen as they are above mere men."

The Flying Inn can be seen less as a novel than as the creation of a whole mythical world. I here take the word "myth" as a child once defined it: a story that is not true on the outside, but is true on the inside. The story's characters have the pristine truth of mythology, speaking words that we can hear all around us in everyday life: They are archetypes. Reading Lord Ivywood's speeches, we can hear precisely the sentiments about religion that surface so frequently in the media today, about the necessity for a wide-ranging relativistic tolerance that must be applied to every religion under the sun—except Christianity. As Ivywood puts it, "Ours is an age when men come more and more to see that the creeds hold treasures for each other, that each religion has a secret for its neighbor, that faith unto faith uttereth speech, and church unto church showeth knowledge."

We think equally of Ivywood when we hear modern paeans to the glorious lost civilization of medieval Islam—that heroic, tolerant, proto-Enlightenment world that supposedly stood in such magnificent contrast to the horrors of European Christendom. Said Ivywood: "Islam has in it the potentialities of being the most progressive of all religions; so that a century or two to come we may see the cause of peace, of science, and of reform supported by Islam." While we might be troubled by aspects of the history of Islam—the pervasive despotism, the mass slave-trading, the corruption—we have to understand that (as Ivywood declares) these notions are products of "the illimitable pro-Christian bias with which the history of those Eastern tribes is told in this country." The very symbol of Islam was the Crescent, a sign of growth (and not the Cross, the death-symbol favored by other religions now out of favor). Ivywood felt that every Western progressive could agree with this sign and all it implied, the "principle of perpetual growth towards an implied and infinite perception." Ivywood has countless modern imitators. For millions today, the sublimest religious truth is to be found not in the native Christian tradition, but in the works of Islamic mystics, of Sufi masters like Rumi, though in New Age forms shorn of much of their overt Muslim content.

Ivywood stands triumphant whenever a contemporary politician or academic boasts how non-Christian immigration will transform our failed Western nations into utopian multicultural societies. When Chesterton wanted to introduce Islam as a factor in his story, he had to concoct a fantastic story of how England forged a diplomatic alliance with the Ottoman Empire. Today, such a stretch is utterly unnecessary, given the migration of mass Muslim populations across Europe and, indeed, into the United States. There are now three million Muslims in Germany, two million in France, at least a million in Britain, and perhaps 750,000 in Italy. The most thorough transformation has been in French cities like Marseilles, which have acquired a strongly North African flavor. Muslims make up around a fifth of the population of Vienna, a proportion that has more than doubled just since the late 1980's. Europe as a whole has some 15 million Muslims, many of whom are of ancient stock, particularly in southeastern parts of the continent. Meanwhile, I can only speculate how many Europeans of Christian heritage still espouse the doctrine of the Incarnation, but I imagine the proportion is tiny. The ivy has spread far.

Many things that Chesterton portrayed, seemingly ludicrously, as part of the Turkish invasion of England have appeared in the West as components of multiculturalism. In September, the U.S. Post Office issued its first stamps commemorating Islam, complete with Arabic inscription—though these items became a little scarce a week or so later, when other Muslims notoriously succeeded in obliterating the World Trade Center. Honestly, I wonder why the word "Ivywood" has not entered our popular speech, commemorated in the same way as "boycott" or—perhaps a better analogy—"quisling." So do not rule out the appearance of the Croscent ere too long—not to say Chrislam. c

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A Tender, Unitarian Christmas

by Aaron D. Wolf

Yankees Touching Harps of Gold

H. Ward Sterett

Appropriately, it was 1984. The Reagan-Bush ticket had won reelection. The U.S. Olympic team had destroyed everyone else at the Summer Games in Los Angeles. The HIV virus had been identified, and a cure for AIDS would surely follow. Hezbollah terrorists had bombed the U.S. embassy northeast of Beruit, and the CIA was busy training terrorists to carry out covert operations in Lebanon to stamp out terrorism. All was right with the world.

Except in Africa, where people were starving, while American yuppies sat at home in the lap of luxury. Fortunately, a collective of British pop stars decided to do something about it. Christmas was approaching, and American consumers were hitting the malls. Why not harness the horsepower of the American mallrat by letting him fill his stockings with cassette recordings of a new rock 'n' roll Christmas anthem and then send all of the profits to Africa to feed the hungry? Boy George, George Michael, Bono, and Simon le Bon—Christmas emissaries, one and all—joined hands, hearts, and voices under the name "Band-Aid" to produce "Do They Know It's Christmas?" in which they chanted:

> there won't be snow in Africa this Christmas time
> The greatest gift they'll get this year is life
> Where nothing ever grows
> No rain or rivers flow
> Do they know it's Christmas time at all?

Seems kind of a shame, after all, for Americans to be sitting around at Midnight Masses or looking at manger scenes while heathens are starving in Africa—no yule log, no chestnuts. They do not even have snow.

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Band-Aid, in all its glory, embodied the American Unitarian spirit of Christmas—a time to love, to laugh, to give. A time when, in the words of one Unitarian minister, "God does not put flesh on in the person of Jesus; God puts on my flesh. God is incarnate in my heart and acts in my life." Sure, we believe in "incarnation," but not the historic one in which God took on human flesh so that He might be born under the Law to redeem those born under the Law (heathen Africans and you and me). The Christmas myth teaches that each of us contains the spark of divinity, and that *we*—not as Christians or "little Christs," but as little gods—*are the Incarnation.*

Much hay is made today among Christians regarding the commercialization of Christmas, but little is said about the Unitarianization of this, the "most wonderful time of the year"—maybe because most do not notice or mind. Yet the season of Christmas—especially Christmas Day, the Feast of the Nativity—is supposed to be a celebration of the central fact of the Christian faith. Take away the tinsel, the day-after-Thanksgiving sales, the Grinch, and folks dressed up like Eskimos, and what do you have left? Good, old-fashioned, American Unitarian Christmas, with "God bless us, every one," and "every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings," and "angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold."

Many, perhaps, do not realize that "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear" was penned by a Unitarian minister, Edmund Sears (1810-1876). This "Christmas carol" is sung in many Catholic, Lutheran, and Presbyterian churches, despite the fact that it does not even mention the "myth" of the birth of the Christ Child. Its message is frighteningly Unitarian:

> But with the woes of sin and strife
> The world has suffered long;
> Beneath the angel-strain have rolled
> Two thousand years of wrong;

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And man, at war with man, hears not
The love-song which they bring;—
Oh hush the noise, ye men of strife,
And hear the angels sing!

The Christian era has been a mere "two thousand years of wrong?" What, then, is the purpose of Christmas? It is our opportunity to "hear the angels sing." What do they sing? "Peace on the earth, goodwill to men from heav'n's all-gracious King." The final verse reflects the Unitarians' intense postmillennial utopian vision for America:

For lo! the days are hastening on
By prophet bards foretold,
When with the ever circling years
Comes round the age of gold;
When Peace shall over all the earth
Its ancient splendors fling,
And the whole world give back the song
Which now the angels sing.

If the deluge of worldwide bloodshed during the "Christian century" did not drown the manifest-destiny, Unitarian dreams of the unfolding "age of gold" in America, surely the World Trade Center bombing of September 11 did. Yet the gospel of American Unitarian Christianity and its Christmas remain the same. Figgy pudding in hand, Christmas is still a time of proclaiming saccharin peace and goodwill—not because of the birth of the Incarnate Son of God, who Himself "*is* our peace," by virtue of the stripes He received at the hands of Roman soldiers. Just "peace and goodwill"—a mantra for postmodern, deracinated America.

> When we celebrate the coming of Christ-the-mere-moral-example, we are celebrating the spirit of Antichrist.

It is odd that, of all people, Unitarians (such as the Reverend Sears) took to the robust celebration of "Christmas." Unitarianism, after all, draws its very name from its denial of the Incarnation. Furthermore, the New England Puritans—that primordial soup from which Unitarians arise—loathed Christmas, calling it "diabolical." In their minds, it was a shameful, "popish" innovation from which the Church must be purified. It was a crime to celebrate Christmas in Puritan Massachusetts until 1681. But the hyperrational, Socinian devolution of Puritanism that occurred in New England during the middle of the 18th century, which produced both evangelicalism (through the Great Awakening) and Unitarianism, also marks the beginning of the modern American incarnation of Christmas.

Today, American Christians lament the fact that, by and large, we have "taken Christ out of Christmas." However, Christ has never really been part of Christmas in popular American culture, because the Incarnation has either been paid mere lip service (as is so often the case among evangelicals) or been completely rejected (as is the case with the "liberal churches" that later took the name "Unitarian"). This low regard for the Incarnation can, in fact, be traced back to the American Puritans.

That the Puritans had a low regard for the doctrine of the Incarnation may seem, on the surface, to be a scandalous charge. Indeed, when the "liberal churches" (as the Puritans dubbed them) began to declare openly that the idea that God became a Man was irrational, the few remaining churches in New England that held to the old ways broke fellowship with the liberals and refused to exchange pulpits with them. When the Puritans' own Harvard College began teaching Arian Christology to its divinity students, the true Puritans left and formed a new school at Andover.

The Puritans who came to the shores of New England to form the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 1630's and 40's believed that the work of the Reformation was left incomplete by Martin Luther, the Church of England, and even John Calvin, and they sought to purge the Church of the "leaven of Rome." They also rejected the organic, incarnational understanding of the Church, declaring that neither apostolic succession nor the Sacraments (as genuine means of grace) are identifying marks of the Church but innovations added to the pure Christianity of apostolic times.

Unlike Catholics in Maryland, Lutherans in New York and Pennsylvania, and their own Anglican neighbors, the Puritans did not celebrate Christmas. Certainly, they did know how to celebrate: They were fond of commemorating everything (including the first Thanksgiving of their neighbors in the Plymouth Colony) with grand feasts and copious quantities of ale, brandy, and rum. But traditional Christian holidays were unacceptable, perverted, popish. Pure reason clearly perceives that the Bible never tells us to celebrate Christmas or any other Christian holiday—in fact (they pointed out), we are ordered *not to respect times and seasons*. (That St. Paul had Jewish festivals and Sabbaths in mind seems to have slipped past them.)

The Puritans thought they were restoring primitive Christianity. Instead, they were reviving old heresies while, at the same time, paying homage to pure human reason as the means by which man distills the truth of God both from the book of nature and biblical revelation. The New England divines were not the traditional curmudgeons they are now portrayed to be: They were young, innovative, and foolish, thinking that Christianity (unlike Christ) is not incarnational. In their brash austerity, they failed to learn the lesson of the central fact of Christianity: that God works through real, physical means.

Puritan sermons do include indirect references to the Incarnation, but little mention is made as to its importance in the grand scheme of salvation or its effect on the everyday life of the believer. What counts is an authentic conversion, followed by the living of a godly life. The Puritans eliminated the popish innovation of pericopal readings—the biblical lessons proscribed for each Sunday of the Church year. They also eliminated the Church year. In doing so, they removed the check and balance that kept the sermon focused on the events surrounding the life, death, and resurrection of the Incarnate Christ. Thus, they were free to preach abstractly, esoterically, and at length on Providence, the identifying marks of true believers, and "religious affections," rather than, say, the significance of the Annunciation, the Nativity, or even the Cross of Christ.

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While the Puritans spurned the writings of the medieval schoolmen, they were nonetheless obsessed with logic. As the monumental work of the late Perry Miller suggests, the Puritans traded what they perceived to be the syllogistic logic of Aristotle (and St. Thomas) for the aesthetic logic of Petrus Ramus. Ramus, a French humanist who converted to generic Protestantism in 1561, was a Platonist who believed that "science ought to study the lessons that are innate in select minds" and use them as a model to "formulate the rules for those who desire to reason well." The incarnational philosophy of St. Thomas, whereby man builds his store of knowledge through real-world experience—founded on mankind's historic encounter with the Incarnate Christ—is replaced by the inward-turning pursuit of innate ideas alongside the revealed truths of Scripture, under the alleged guidance of the Holy Ghost. For Aristotle, outward appearances were all we have to go by; for American Puritan divines such as Thomas Hooker, godly men are to judge truth based on the experience of "what is found and felt in the heart." Hence, the Incarnation as a real-world event did not have a direct influence on the Puritan divines' pursuit of truth.

Denying that regeneration is wrought by God through the Sacrament of Baptism, the Puritans insisted that God works directly on the mind and the heart, when man looks squarely on the biblical statements of "prophet bards" through the lens of human reason. Thus, they emphasized dramatic conversions, in which the light of God immediately penetrates the darkened mind of the sinner, and he is born from above, henceforth unable to do anything but follow God and obey His will.

Two strains of emphasis were commingled in Puritan thought (both were signs of the enlightened times): on the one hand, the direct, immediate divine working on the heart and mind of the individual to produce a radical conversion; on the other hand, the direct, immediate working of human reason on both nature and the Bible to produce or distill new theological truths. These two contradictory impulses parted company during the so-called Great Awakening of the mid-18th century.

Second-generation Puritan immigrants had failed to grasp the covenantal vision that had driven their parents to cross the Atlantic, and they had failed to catechize their children. Despite fiery jeremiads and annual Election Days, stalwart divines such as Increase Mather were incapable of motivating them to grasp hold of the ideology of the founders—John Cotton, Governor Winthrop—even though they were upheld before the people as icons almost on par with the Church Fathers. New England was prepared for nonconformist, itinerant preachers such as George Whitefield and John and Charles Wesley to sweep through the towns, preaching the "Gospel" of the conversion experience—without the cumbersome Ramist logic and covenant theology of the Puritans—to disaffected yeomen on the frontier along the Connecticut River Valley, as well as those less fortunate in the Eastern cities. Masses of unconverted, third-generation Puritans flocked to the fields (Whitefield was banned by many of the New England churches) to be born again or to rededicate themselves to God. Soon, great numbers of Yankee colonists had become "Christians" independent of any church and were setting out to find churches that catered to their need for exciting preaching and lively music. Evangelicalism—emphasizing the *conversion experience* and the moral life of believers—was born.

Upper-class professionals in eastern Massachusetts (especially Boston) and their rationalist Puritan ministers were shocked and dismayed at the news from the West that business was being neglected as folks dropped everything to partake of the "excitements" of the "new way." In the words of the Rev. Charles Chauncy, some were

> exhorting, some singing, some clapping their hands, some laughing, some crying, some shrieking and roaring out; and so invincibly set were they in these ways, especially when encouraged by any ministers (as was too often the case, that it was a vain thing to argue with them to show them the indecency of such behavior).

Such behavior was incongruous with the moral austerity of the urban East. Partly as a reaction to the "excitements" of "women, children, negroes, and ignorant men," and partly because of the rationalism that had been transmitted to them from their forebears, the ground had been prepared for the freethinking, Socinian liberalism that was sweeping Scotland and England to take root in the established churches of urban New England. During the latter half of the 18th century, scholarly ministers began to apply the light of pure reason to the Incarnation itself, and the suprarational notion that God became Man in the Person of Jesus Christ seemed less and less tenable. The Gospel, they determined, means the transformation of the character of the individual by following the examples set forth in the Bible. American Unitarianism—emphasizing *reason* and the moral life of believers—was born.

Modern religious observers often note that evangelicalism is virtually the same as liberalism, just 50 years behind. That is because, by and large, they share many core principles, as well as a common origin in the Puritans. What distinguishes evangelicalism from Unitarianism is an intellectual commitment to what came to be known as the "fundamentals" in the early 20th century. Evangelicals retain a belief in the transcendent, supernatural characteristics of orthodox Christianity: the Virgin Birth of Christ, His substitutionary atonement for the sins of the world, His resurrection from the dead, and even His Incarnation in the womb of the Virgin Mary. These core commitments cause evangelicals to follow the Puritans in emphasizing a dramatic, supernaturally enabled and inspired conversion experience. But for those already converted, the pursuit of individual piety is much the same as the liberals'—devoid of Sacraments and the "working out of salvation" that accompanies them. Since salvation comes through the instant conversion of the mind and heart, the Incarnation plays little part in the process of creating or maintaining faith and its goal, the forgiveness of sins. The Incarnation merely makes it possible, in the divine scheme of redemption, for the individual to receive Christ "in the heart," whether that means the historic Jesus (as evangelicals hold) or the Jesus of myth (as the Unitarians hold). Personal (and social) moral betterment thus becomes the emphasis of Christian piety, since "salvation" is either something you have already got out of the way, or it is unnecessary. Thus, the meaning and use of Scripture, in sermons and Bible studies, is found in following the example of Jesus—or David, or Paul, or John the Baptist. Unitarians may not have invented the bracelet, but they have been asking "What would Jesus do?" since the dawn of the 19th century. A Yankee coalition of evangelicals and Unitarians answered that question by marching from one cause to another during the 19th and 20th centuries—from Abolitionism, to Prohibitionism, to suffrage, to the "war to end all wars."

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And it was on this basis that the Unitarians transformed Christmas into something that both liberals and evangelicals could enjoy—a clear departure from the Puritan past. By 1842, a new interpretation of the holiday was already in place:

> I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round—apart from the veneration due to its sacred name and origin, if anything belonging to it can be apart from that—as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time: the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when men and women seem by one consent to open their shut-up hearts freely, and to think of people below them as if they really were fellow-passengers to the grave, and not another race of creatures bound on other journeys. And therefore, uncle, though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good; and I say, God bless it!

By the time that Charles Dickens, a Unitarian, put these words into the mouth of the nephew of Ebeneezer Scrooge, they rang true in the minds of his readers. It is "salvation by character"—one of James Freeman Clarke's "Five Points of Unitarianism penned"—that both saves Scrooge and transforms Christmas.

Unitarians of Clarke's ilk taught that man needs religion to inspire faith in "things unseen and eternal, to give him the hope of continued existence." The new architects of Christmas borrowed images from Catholic, Lutheran, and Anglican traditions and stripped them of their incarnational value: candles, bells, even the Christmas tree. Though German Lutherans and Catholics had been decorating Christmas trees in New York and Pennsylvania since they first arrived in the colonies, it was Charles Follen, a German immigrant who became both a Unitarian and the first professor of German at Harvard, who actively popularized the Christmas tree in 1832 among Unitarians in New England. "It really looked beautiful," one guest observed. "The room seemed in a blaze, and the ornaments were so well hung on that no accident happened, except that one doll's petticoat caught fire." Follen, an ardent abolitionist, liked the idea of the tree, because it inspired wonder, while its incarnational symbolism—the evergreen, representing eternal life; the lights pointing to the Light of the World; the tree itself, reminding us of the Tree on which the Christ Child would ultimately hang—is evident only to those who are taught.

Clement Moore, an Anglican convert to Unitarianism, penned the poem "A Visit From St. Nicholas" in 1822, transforming the memory of the charitable bishop from Asia Minor into the myth of an old man who works his elfen magic every Christmas Eve, bringing gifts to good boys and girls. Whatever his intentions, the effect has been long-lasting in America: What once was a real person who performed acts of charity as a response to the redemptive work of Christ (someone genuinely worth imitating) became an unreal, mythic figure, who inspires us to be nice to one another.

Unitarians quickly created a corpus of Christmas carols that replaced the rich, incarnational hymnody of Christmas past. They were uncomfortable with the bold lines of Charles Wesley: "Veiled in flesh, the Godhead see / Hail the Incarnate Deity" ("Hark! The Herald Angels Sing"). Henry Wadsworth Longfellow's "I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day" echoed the sterile line "Peace on earth, goodwill to men" in the ears of his Unitarian brothers fighting amidst "the canons thund'ring in the South." In 1857, John Pierpont, a Unitarian minister, wrote the delightful "Jingle Bells" as a Christmas carol, celebrating the joys of the one-horse open sleigh and laughter, minus the greatest motivation for joy and revelry. And the Reverend Sears painted Christmas using gnostic imagery of "angels bending near the earth to touch their harps of gold" and singing about "peace."

These Unitarian images of Christmas cheer, transmitted to the 20th century by evangelicals and liberals—and Lutherans, Catholics, Presbyterians, and Anglicans under their influence (as well as the likes of Perry Como, Bing Crosby, and Bob Hope)—are at best sentimental, and at worst, anti-incarnational, which makes it interesting to ponder why the promoters of Kwanza, Hanukkah, and Ramadan are so put off by the remaining Christmas symbols in popular American culture. Others have reacted to the Unitarianization of Christmas in different ways. Some modern liberals invoke the spirit of "Band-Aid" and transform Christmas into a time to focus on solving world hunger, giving to charity, and working in soup kitchens. Some evangelicals emphasize the birth of Christ insofar as it provides an opportunity to evoke more conversion experiences. One local megachurch here in Rockford produced its own version of *A Christmas Carol*, in which Scrooge is taken on a journey into the past to see all of the opportunities he had to accept Christ as his personal savior. Some conservatives have returned to the rigorous hatred of Christmas that was once unique to the Puritans, only they call it "pagan" instead of "popish," pointing out the origins of Saturnalia and the yule log.

More emphasis on generic "peace and goodwill" will, no doubt, flood the culture at Christmas during this, the real 1984, as images of the World Trade Center bombing are commingled with shots of bombs dropping on Kabul and star-studded galas with, perhaps, the Backstreet Boys singing "Do They Know It's Christmas?" (Osama bin Laden makes a very nice Goldstein.) But a grave danger lies in absorbing Christmas symbols while ignoring that which is signified by them. Campaigns to "put Christ back into Christmas" are not only vain, they are destructive—if we leave out the Incarnation. When we celebrate the coming of Christ-the-mere-moral-example, we are (according to St. John's First Epistle) celebrating the spirit of Antichrist. When we celebrate the Christ-who-enables-our-conversion-experience, ignoring the Incarnation, we also ignore the very means by which genuine Christian conversion occurs: through the infinite merits and suffering of the One who must needs be fully God and fully Man.

The antidote for the American Unitarian Christmas is not, as some suggest, to do away with Christmas altogether. America needs to rediscover the mystery of the Incarnation and incarnational, sacramental Christianity—a robust return to the collective wisdom of Christianity past. Unitarians and evangelicals (as well as the older traditions, which are so much under the sway of both) must look for inspiration beyond the American Puritan experience if they are to survive at all during these troubled times. There, they will also rediscover the true inspiration for Christmas and its crèches, trees, and bells. They will understand why we should kill the fatted calf *and* work in a soup kitchen. They will once again sing "*Hodie Christus natus est*" and "*In dulci jubilo*." They might even sing "Jingle Bells" for the right reasons. And, facing the possibility of terrorist attacks, anthrax, or even World War III, they can, thanks to the incarnational hope offered by Christmas, "sleep in heavenly peace."

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"Bless the Lord, All You Works of the Lord"

Nature and the Incarnation

by Scott P. Richert

H. Ward Sterett

In one of the first episodes of the latest *Star Trek* series, *Enterprise*, the crew, a few weeks out from Earth on the ship's maiden voyage, has become homesick. Suddenly, an inhabitable planet appears off of the port side. There are no signs of humanoid life, but the captain sends a small team down to gather information and to grab a little shore leave. What they find is astonishing: The planet is a veritable paradise, full of lush forests, stunning waterfalls, vast savannahs, and a remarkable array of Earth-like wildlife.

But everything is not what it seems. By the team's first evening on the planet, a series of strong electrical storms forces the crew to take refuge in a cave, where an hallucinogenic substance begins to affect their sanity. Ultimately, the team must flee the planet to avoid killing one another. By forcing them to flee, the planet has rid itself of the alien invaders and restored its natural balance. Paradise, it seems, is no place for man.

Welcome to the brave new world of modern environmentalism, in which man is no more than a bacterium against which Nature—namely, everything other than man—must generate antibodies in order to protect itself. To be fair to the writers and producers of *Enterprise*, their story is told from the perspective of the crew members, not from that of the planet. But the vision of Nature as a closed, idyllic system that man enters only as an alien has become a mainstay of modern environmentalist thought.

In this vision, what room is there for God? As long as He is not the Christian God, perhaps more than we might think. After all, the idea of a closed system that can protect itself against invasive aliens goes well beyond strictly materialist evolutionary theories, which explain change in a species as a means of *adapting to* changes taking place in external conditions, not of *preventing* or *reversing* such changes. While adaptation can be explained through the simple application of physical laws, preventing or reversing *external* changes obviously requires an active intelligence to keep the closed system in balance. This logically leads to something like the Gaia hypothesis, in which the Earth is viewed as a quasi-organism, able to respond to threats to its existence in the way a sentient being would. The rise of antibiotic-resistant bacteria, plagues, even droughts and hurricanes are viewed, by the same people who would condemn Pat Robertson for suggesting that AIDS might be the Christian God's retribution against homosexuals, as Earth's attempts to protect herself from overpopulation and environmental destruction. This environmentalist vision, obviously, has no room for the Christian understanding of God. After all, if man is an invader who disrupts the system, then what is the God Who became man? Despite claims to the contrary, any environmentalist ethic that views man as wholly other than Nature cannot be Christian.

Conservative Christians have responded to anti-Christian environmentalism by advancing a "Judeo-Christian" understanding of the relationship between man and Nature based almost entirely upon the Creation story in Genesis. While the Creation story makes it clear that man is not only an integral part of Nature but the very pinnacle of Creation, the emphasis on man's dominion over Nature leaves a very important question unanswered: How is man to exercise that dominion? The answer to that question goes to the heart of the Christian vision of nature, distinguishing it from those of Judaism and Islam.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him: and without him was made nothing that was made. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth" (John 1:1-3, 14). In a few short sentences, Saint John provides

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a gloss on the Creation story that radically alters the way Christians view Nature. The God Who created the world and everything in it has become a part of Creation; indeed, He has become the centerpiece of Creation, the Savior of mankind. In taking on our nature, He has not only redeemed us but drawn us closer to Him. As C.S. Lewis explained in his reflection on Christmas in *The Business of Heaven*,

> In creation God makes—invents—a person and "utters"—injects—him into the realm of Nature. In the Incarnation, God the Son takes the body and human soul of Jesus, and, through that, the whole environment of Nature, all the creaturely predicament, into His own being. So that "He came down from Heaven" can almost be transposed into "Heaven drew earth up into it," and locality, limitation, sleep, sweat, footsore weariness, frustration, pain, doubt, and death, are, from before all worlds, known by God from within.

God's drawing of all nature into Him, becoming "all in all," as Lewis puts it, is something far different from the pantheist vision in which God is simply all. "[W]hat is everywhere and always, imageless and ineffable, only to be glimpsed in dream and symbol and the acted poetry of ritual becomes small, solid—no bigger than a man who can lie asleep in a rowing boat on the Lake of Galilee." Conversely, that Man is "everywhere and always, imageless and ineffable," and by taking up His Cross and following Him, we too can share—more remotely, but share nonetheless—in the inner life of God.

The Incarnation makes it clear that the Creation story of Genesis does not end when God rests on the seventh day.

The Incarnation thus confirms man's role as co-creator with God, as Saint Augustine argued in *De Musica*. "Let us make man to our image and likeness" (Genesis 1:26) takes on a fuller meaning when Christ, in turn, assumes man's image and likeness. While some conservative Christians tend to stress man's "dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth" whenever they wish to justify the clearcutting of a forest or the building of a 40-acre Wal-Mart on fertile soil, the recognition that man's dominion must be exercised within the context of his participation in Christ's creative activity places limits on what man is allowed to do to Nature. As co-creators with Christ (within our limited human sphere), can we justify laying waste to that which Christ has created? Why would we want to?

Christianity is not an ideology, and, therefore, it does not offer an abstract blueprint for the moral life. Rather, the Incarnation confirms the essential historicity of man, which means that the morality of any particular act is inseparable from the circumstances in which it occurs. Man comes to know right and wrong not through mere reasoning, but through concrete participation in the life of Christ. While it is wrong to view Christ as simply an extraordinarily moral figure whose actions we should mimic, we can learn from His life on Earth, and we should never dismiss any detail of that life as insignificant. From His training as a carpenter at the side of Saint Joseph, to His first miracle at the wedding at Cana, to His raising of Lazarus from the dead, Christ's human life is one of creation and renewal, affirming the goodness of nature and of man's participation therein. As Greek Orthodox Bishop Kallistos Ware writes in *The Orthodox Way*, Christians are the true materialists, because Christ Himself has shown us the incalculable value of the material world. We know that the Lord rejoices in His works (Psalm 103); we should do the same. Even in desolation, we realize that this vale of tears will one day be renewed and glorified, as will our material bodies. Our duty is to begin that renewal here and now, in our own limited way. In the resurrection, the fullness of Lewis's statement that "Heaven drew earth up into it" at the Incarnation will be revealed.

Keeping this in mind, how should we live our lives today, in history, before the resurrection? What is the proper Christian attitude toward Nature? The Incarnation makes it clear that the Creation story of Genesis does not end when God rests on the seventh day. Creation is an ongoing process, and man, as Saint Augustine argues, plays the central role in bringing the lower spheres of Creation into harmony with the upper. As Christ explained in the parable of the talents, it is not enough for us simply to preserve that which we have been given. Our actions should increase the beauty of the world, so that we may join Nature in proclaiming the Lord's praise:

> Praise the Lord from the earth, ye dragons, and all ye deeps:
> Fire, hail, snow, ice, stormy winds, which fulfil his word:
> Mountains and all hills, fruitful trees and all cedars:
> Beasts and all cattle: serpents and feathered fowls:
> Kings of the earth and all people: princes and all judges of the earth:
> Young men and maidens: let the old with the younger, praise the name of the Lord:
> For his name alone is exalted [Psalm 148: 7-13].

The Incarnation also teaches us that our actions should not be abstract: Christ performed the greatest "global" feat in history—the salvation of all mankind—by "acting locally." Because we are bound by time and space, our moral sphere is limited; by focusing our efforts on "the preservation of the environment," we risk the destruction of our very backyard. If we flatter ourselves by believing that our Sally Struthers-like concern about global warming and the destruction of the Amazon rainforest will help keep "Earth in the balance," then we, like Al Gore, are likely to see little wrong with dumping tires and other waste in the little plot of land that God has actually entrusted to us.

When God created man, He placed him in a garden; but when Adam's sin resulted in our expulsion from Eden, our toil in the earth had just begun. As Wes Jackson writes in *Becoming Native to This Place*, "creating the world is involved in our every act. It is impossible for us to operate in our daily lives and *not* create the world that everyone must live in." The question can never be whether we will create, but whether we will create in His image, or in ours.

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Chronicles Intelligence Assessment

Osama bin Laden: The Balkan Connection

by Srdja Trifkovic

The U.S. and British embassies were shut down in Sarajevo on October 17 after receiving threats from Bosnian Muslims and their foreign coreligionists resident in Bosnia who profess outrage at the bombing of Afghanistan. "This step has been taken due to a credible security threat to the official U.S. presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina," a U.S. official told the Associated Press. American and British citizens working in Bosnia were also warned to take extra precautions. Bosnia is turning from a multicultural, multiethnic protectorate of the New World Order into an Islamic threat to Western interests.

By now, we have all heard that Osama bin Laden's rise to near-mythical status in the Muslim world was initially facilitated by the support he and other fundamentalist Muslims received from the United States following the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979. But according to former CIA director Robert Gates, the U.S. intelligence services began to arm the *mujahideen* even *before* the Soviet intervention.

This has been confirmed by President Carter's national security advisor at the time, Zbigniew Brzezinski, who told the French weekly *Le Nouvel Observateur* in January 1998 that Carter signed the first directive for secret aid to the opponents of the pro-Soviet regime in Kabul on July 3, 1979: "That very day, I wrote a note to the president in which I explained to him that in my opinion this aid was going to induce a Soviet military intervention . . . We didn't push the Russians to intervene, but we knowingly increased the probability that they would." The policy, which Brzezinski called "an excellent idea," was to create a "Soviet Vietnam," and it entailed large-scale arming and training of Islamic fundamentalists, including volunteers from other Muslim countries.

Mistaken and shortsighted as this strategy turned out to be, it was (conceivably) justified by the dictates of the Cold War: Your enemy's enemy is your *de facto* ally, if not a trusted friend. Blowback was a risk, but one at least arguably worth taking.

Over two decades later, it is necessary to rectify more recent mistakes of a similar nature. If the victims of New York are to be properly avenged and the military effort in Afghanistan is to be meaningful, the Bush administration should investigate the biggest unknown scandal of the Clinton years: that throughout the 1990's, the U.S. government effectively aided and abetted bin Laden's operations in the Balkans, long after he was recognized as a major security threat to the United States.

Throughout the war in Bosnia, voices in the West warned that neither the Christian Serbs nor the Croats would ever willingly live in the same state with Muslims who wanted to dominate them under the label of "multiethnicity." The systematic portrayal of the Serbs as demons and the Bosnian Muslims as innocent martyrs in the cause of multicultural tolerance concealed the fact that the Bosnian war was primarily religious in nature. Before the first shots were fired, Bosnian Muslim leader Alija Izetbegovic proudly proclaimed in his "Islamic Declaration" that "there can be no peace or coexistence between the Islamic faith and non-Islamic societies and political institutions." He warned his fellow Muslims that "the Islamic movement should and must start taking power as soon as it is morally and numerically strong enough not only to overthrow the existing non-Islamic power structure, but also to build a great Islamic federation spreading from Morocco to Indonesia, from tropical Africa to Central Asia."

In the aftermath of September's terrorist attacks, it has been revealed that a highly classified State Department report, prepared last year, warned that the Muslim-controlled portions of Bosnia have become a safe haven for Islamic terrorism. The report pointed out that hundreds of foreign *mujahideen*, who became Bosnian citizens and received passports after battling their Christian foes, present a major terrorist threat to Europe and the United States. They include hard-core terrorists, some with ties to Osama bin Laden, who were protected by the Muslim government in Sarajevo. The findings of the report were summarized in the words of a former State Department official: Bosnia-Herzegovina is "a staging area" for Islamic terrorists.

According to the Muslim-dominated government's Ministry of Civil Affairs and Communications, there are roughly only 420 naturalized Arabs in Bosnia, but this figure is almost certainly incorrect. The true magnitude of the problem was revealed in a report in the European edition of the U.S. military newspaper *Stars and Stripes* on September 30. Relying on Israeli intelligence sources, the report warned that "about 6,000 fighters in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Albania and Macedonia are ready to do bin Laden's bidding if America strikes his camps elsewhere." The same source argued that "a nucleus of bin Laden followers in the Balkans could balloon into an army of about 40,000 men," mostly local Muslims from Bosnia, Kosovo, and Albania. *Stars and Stripes* pointed out that the Israelis have agents on the ground in the Balkans, and that their predictions "have proved frighteningly accurate in the past."

The core of bin Laden's Balkan network is composed of the veterans of the El Moujahed brigade of the Bosnian-Muslim army. The brigade was established in 1992 and comprises volunteers from all over the Islamic world whose passage to Bosnia was facilitated and financed, at least in part, by bin Laden's network. The unit was distinguished by its spectacular cruelty to Christian prisoners, remarkable even by the Balkans' unpleasant standards. In 1993, the members of the brigade decapitated 26 Serb prisoners on Mount Ozren with an ax, to the chants of "*Allahu-akbar*." The gruesome spectacle was videotaped and circulated not only in Bosnia but throughout the network of Islamic centers and stores and internet sites in the Western world. El Moujahed was the nursery from which an international terrorist network grew and ultimately stretched from the Middle

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East to North America.

In the wake of September's terrorist attacks, it was reported that Muslim authorities had issued a Bosnian passport to Osama bin Laden at the Bosnian embassy in Vienna in 1993. The Izetbegovic government thus facilitated the movement of the man who had, by that time, already acquired a reputation as a dangerous terrorist. Another beneficiary of Bosnian citizenship and passport was Abu Zubeida, a Palestinian from Gaza and one of bin Laden's top lieutenants. He was in charge of contacts with other Islamic terrorist networks and sent recruits to terrorist training camps in Afghanistan. He arranged training for unsuccessful bomb plots in Canada and Jordan at the turn of the century and a recently foiled suicide attack on the U.S. embassy in Paris.

Under the Dayton Peace Accords that ended the Bosnian war, all Islamic volunteers who fought with the Muslim government's army were supposed to leave the country. Several hundred, however, took over the Serbian village of Bocinja Donja, near the industrial city of Zenica in central Bosnia, and provided instruction to local Muslim forces in terrorist activities. They first attracted attention on December 18, 1995 when a car bomb prematurely exploded in Zenica. It was apparently meant for American troops stationed nearby, as revenge for the sentencing of Sheik Omah Abdel Rahman in connection with the first World Trade Center bombing.

Two months later, in February 1996, SFOR units raided the training center of the Bosnian government's secret police (AID), located near Fojnica, and several people were arrested. Instructors from the Middle East were teaching AID officers to disguise bombs as toys and ice-cream cones.

In March 1996, in the northern French city of Lille just before a summit of the Group of Seven leading industrial nations, French police discovered a car packed with explosives. Their investigation led them to a house in the industrial city of Roubaix. After a gunfight, the house exploded when the munitions inside caught fire. Four charred bodies were found, but two men managed to flee. One was killed and the other was wounded in a gun battle later that day. In their car, police found rocket launchers, automatic weapons, ammunition, and grenades. They also recovered an electronic organizer containing coded telephone contacts, nearly a dozen of them in Bosnia. The ringleader was identified as a French convert to Islam named Caze, who had fought on the Muslim side in Bosnia. The first known terrorist cell linked with the Muslim safe haven in Bosnia and operating in the West was revealed. It was composed of nine men who attended a local mosque, most of whom had received military training at the El Moujahed compound near Zenica. All of their weapons were smuggled home from the Bosnian war.

That the government in Sarajevo was sympathetic to Islamic militants is not surprising. The facts of the case were known to the American media but seldom allowed into the open. Three months after the Lille incident, the *Washington Post* confirmed that "the Clinton administration knew of the activities of a so-called Relief Agency which was, in fact, funneling weapons and money into Bosnia to prop up the Izetebegovic Muslim government in Sarajevo."

The following year, the Bosnian connection resurfaced following the bombing of the Al Khobar building in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. The *New York Times* reported on June 26, 1997, that several suspects had served with Bosnian Muslim forces and were linked to Osama bin Laden. From that point on, the United States and its allies complained periodically and ineffectively to the Muslim authorities in Sarajevo about the continued presence of the *mujahideen* in Bosnia. According to a report in the *Los Angeles Times* (October 7), former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright—a zealous champion of the Bosnian-Muslim cause—personally appealed to Alija Izetbegovic to oust suspected terrorists or rescind their Bosnian passports. The effort by top State Department aides continued through the last days of the Clinton administration:

> Izetbegovic declined the appeals . . . [and] argued that many had married Bosnian women, had taken up farming and were legal citizens . . . Although Izetbegovic stepped down in October 2000, many hard-liners remain in Bosnia's bureaucracy, and they are suspected of operating their own rogue intelligence service that protects Islamic extremists, military and intelligence sources said.

In 1999, this connection attracted further attention when U.S. law-enforcement authorities discovered that several suspects who have visited or lived in Bosnia were associated with a terrorist plot to bomb targets in the United States (including the Los Angeles International Airport) on New Year's Day 2000. Among them was Karim Said Atmani, a former roommate of Ahmet Ressemi, who was arrested at the Canadian-U.S. border in mid-December 1999 with a carload of explosives. The Canadian authorities deported Atmani to Bosnia-Herzegovina on October 18, 1998, supposedly without knowing of his alleged participation in terrorist activities throughout Europe. Ressmi decided to continue the plot alone. When he was captured, American officials tried to track down Atmani, but Bosnian officials denied that he had been deported there. Investigators later learned that Atmani had been issued a new Bosnian passport six months earlier. Atmani was finally arrested this year and awaits sentencing on terrorism charges in a French jail.

Another Bosnian veteran, a Palestinian named Khalil Deek, was arrested in Jordan in late December 1999 on suspicion of involvement in a plot to blow up tourist sites. Another Bosnian citizen, Hamid Aich, lived in Canada at the same time as Atmani and worked for a charity associated with bin Laden.

An Algerian with Bosnian citizenship, described by a U.S. official as "a junior Osama bin Laden," tried to smuggle explosives in 1998 to an Egyptian terrorist group plotting to destroy U.S. military installations in Germany. The shipment included military C-4 plastic explosives and blasting caps. The CIA intercepted the shipment, foiling the attack. The Algerian was Abdelkader Mokhtari—also known as Abu el Maali—a self-styled "community leader" in the village of Bocinja. U.S. intelligence established that el Maali was the leader of the group. Washington tried to force his deportation by suspending a military-assistance program in 1999. Only when Washington threatened to stop all economic aid did Izetbegovic agree to deport El Maali. He was back in Bosnia within a year, moving in and out of the country freely. According to sources close to the NATO-led peacekeeping force in Bosnia, he is now believed to be in Afghanistan with bin Laden's Al Qaeda group.

Mehrez Amdouni, another veteran from Bosnia, was arrested in September 1999 in Istanbul, where he arrived with a Bosnian passport. It has been confirmed that Ahmet Ressemi had ties with Said Atmani, his colleague from the El Moujahed brigade. The *New York Times Magazine* reported on February 6, 2000,

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that, "last year, sources in Jordan say, the Mukhabarat, the intelligence service, alerted the C.I.A. to at least three plots by Bosnian-based Islamic terrorists to attack U.S. targets in Europe."

While an elaborate Islamic terror network was developing in Bosnia, Osama bin Laden was busy looking for fresh opportunities in the Balkans. During the NATO war against Serbia, in May 1999, U.S. Sen. Jim Inhofe warned that, if American troops went into Kosovo, they would be fighting alongside a terrorist organization known to finance its operations with drug sales—including some to the United States. Inhofe was one of the few legislators to complain that, by joining hands with the KLA, the United States would also become partners with Osama bin Laden.

Six months before the NATO bombing, the *Jerusalem Post* reported that Bosnia was the first bastion of Islamic power in the former Yugoslavia, but Kosovo promised to be the second (Steve Rodan, "Kosovo seen as new Islamic bastion," September 14, 1998). The Albanians had been provided with financial and military support from Islamic countries, the report continued, and they were bolstered by hundreds of *mujahideen* from Albania. "US defense officials say the support includes that of Osama Bin Laden," and the Defense Department confirmed that bin Laden's Al Qaeda organization supported Muslim fighters in both Bosnia and Kosovo. The report quoted sources in Washington as saying that the Clinton administration was fully aware of the Islamic militants' activities in Bosnia and Kosovo but had looked the other way: "The administration wants to keep the lid on the pot at all costs . . . Needless to say, the Europeans have been quite upset by this."

The usually well-informed Israeli paper correctly sensed a shift in U.S. policy that facilitated bin Laden's activities. In early 1998, the State Department had listed the KLA as an international terrorist organization that supported itself through drug profits and loans from terrorists like bin Laden. By the end of that year, however, the policy had been reversed.

The KLA's rehabilitation in Washington went hand-in-hand with its growing links with Islamic radicals. The *Sunday Times* of London reported on March 22, 1998, that Iranian Revolutionary Guards had joined forces with Osama bin Laden to support the Albanian insurgency in Kosovo, hoping "to turn the region into their main base for Islamic armed activity in Europe." By November, the same paper confirmed that bin Laden's terrorist network in Albania was regularly sending units to fight against Serbs in Kosovo. The paper pointed out that bin Laden's Albanian operation dated back to 1994, when it was established under the guise of a Saudi humanitarian agency. In those early days, bin Laden's group enjoyed the support of then-premier Sali Berisha (also an American "asset" at that time), and the main KLA training base was later established on Berisha's property in northern Albania.

Correctly sensing that the anti-Serb course of the Clinton administration would lead it to tolerate his activities in Albania and Kosovo, bin Laden issued a communiqué in August 1998 listing Serbia among "the worst infidel nations." The communiqué, faxed to Knight-Ridder from bin Laden's supporters in London and translated from Arabic, boasted of "great victories" in Bosnia and Kosovo. As the United States was putting pressure on Belgrade to accept the Clinton administration's terms in Kosovo, the *Times* of London reported (November 26, 1998) that the Islamic fighters who had "created havoc in the war in Bosnia" were moving on to Kosovo. The links between Osama bin Laden and the KLA were facilitated by the chaotic conditions in neighboring Albania, the *Times* went on, allowing Muslim fighters to settle there, often under the guise of humanitarian workers.

"They were terrorists in 1998 and now, because of politics, they're freedom fighters," a top U.S. drug-enforcement official complained to the *Washington Times* in May 1999. By that time, the NATO bombing was in full swing, however, and the *mujahideen* were once again American allies. According to the *Washington Times*,

> The reports said bin Laden's organization . . . has both trained and financially supported the KLA. Many border crossings into Kosovo by "foreign fighters" also have been documented and include veterans of the militant group Islamic Jihad from Bosnia, Chechnya and Afghanistan. Many of the crossings originated in neighboring Albania and . . . included parties of up to 50 men.

Bin Laden has become an integral attachment to KLA operations. It is not surprising, therefore, that he has established a presence in Macedonia, the latest victim of flawed U.S. policy. The *Washington Times* reported on June 22 that the NLA (the KLA subsidiary in Macedonia) was largely—but not exclusively—dependent on the drug trade: "In addition to drug money, the NLA also has another prominent venture capitalist: Osama bin Laden." The sum supplied was estimated at between six and seven million dollars over six months.

The net result is that American and other foreign peacekeeping forces in Kosovo and Macedonia are in real and present danger from attacks by Albanian Muslims. According to Israeli intelligence sources, any Balkan movement against America would be coordinated by Ayman al-Zawahri, an Egyptian deputy to bin Laden. According to *Stars and Stripes* (September 30), "al-Zawahri was in Tirana, Albania, to organize such a force. It would draw upon members of the Albanian underworld as well as Islamic extremists there and in Kosovo." The source insists that Osama's followers are not Arabs but "Muslims living in the area" (i.e., Albanians). One U.S. government official, speaking on condition of anonymity, told *Stars and Stripes* that Albanian locals confirmed that forces loyal to bin Laden are camped in the hills.

* * *

In the aftermath of the attacks in New York and Washington, it is certainly desirable, and perhaps even possible, for the United States to devise an effective antiterrorist strategy. This cannot be done, however, unless there is a change in the policy that breeds terrorism. A decade of American covert and overt support for the Muslims in the former Yugoslavia has been a foreign-policy disaster, detrimental to peace in the Balkans and to American interests. Its beneficiaries are Osama bin Laden and his coreligionists in Sarajevo, Tirana, Pristina, and Tetovo. If we are to take the "war on terrorism" seriously, the mistakes of the past need to be recognized and rectified. The Bush administration should investigate the facts of this case, name the instigators of such policies in Washington, and ensure that none of them remain in any positions of responsibility. Once they are removed, it will be possible, at last, to recognize that the Balkan policy of successive U.S. administrations—the policy that made bin Laden's entrenchment in the Balkans not only possible but inevitable—was fundamentally flawed and requires urgent revision. c

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Some Dare Call It Justice

by Stephen B. Presser

"Justice is a contract of expediency, entered upon to prevent men harming or being harmed."

—Epicurus, *Aphorisms*

The Betrayal of America: How the Supreme Court Undermined the Constitution and Chose Our President
by Vincent Bugliosi
New York: Thunder's Mouth Press; 166 pp., $9.95

Supreme Injustice: How the High Court Hijacked Election 2000
by Alan M. Dershowitz
New York: Oxford University Press; 240 pp., $25.00

Breaking the Deadlock: The 2000 Election, the Constitution, and the Courts
by Richard A. Posner
Princeton: Princeton University Press; 266 pp., $24.95

H. Ward Sterett

According to leading members of the American law professoriate, the U.S. Supreme Court's decision, on December 12, 2000, in *Bush* v. *Gore* was "lawless and unprecedented," "not worthy of 'respect,'" featured "sickening hypocrisy and insincere constitutional posturing," was "a disgrace," "illegitimate, undemocratic, and unprincipled," "egregious," "a sleight-of-hand trick," and "quite demonstrably the worst Supreme Court decision in history." Off the wall as this criticism may be, it is mild compared to that leveled at the Court by Vincent Bugliosi (whose claim to fame is that he successfully prosecuted mass-murderer Charles Manson) in a slapdash paperback consisting mainly of notes and emendations to his article in the *Nation* (February 5) entitled "None Dare Call it Treason." The book features a cover with mock police mug shots of five Supreme Court justices. Those five, according to Bugliosi, "deliberately and knowingly decided to nullify the votes of the 50 million Americans who voted for Al Gore and to steal the election for Bush." "The stark reality," Bugliosi continues,

> is that the institution Americans trust the most to protect its freedoms and principles committed one of the biggest and most serious crimes this nation has ever seen—pure and simple, the theft of the presidency.

If this was indeed theft, he concludes, then "by definition, the perpetrators of this crime have to be denominated criminals."

If you love trial lawyers, hate George Bush, and want some ammunition to argue that Justices Rehnquist, Scalia, Kennedy, Thomas, and O'Connor belong behind bars, this acerbic little rant is for you. Bugliosi does a fine job spinning every fact and circumstance in Al Gore's favor, but his unbalanced account is not helpful if you really want to know whether the justices actually did trash the rule of law last year.

What they did in their December 12 decision was to stop the Florida recount effort and hand the presidential election to George W. Bush. Was this a betrayal of the Constitution? Why would anybody think so? The problem, as Bugliosi has fingered it, is that the reasoning of the Court's *per curiam* opinion—in which, by the way, seven justices (not five, as Bugliosi, Dershowitz, and most others would have us believe) joined—*was* deeply flawed. *Per curiam* ("for the court") opinions are unsigned. Rumor has it that one of the Court's swing justices, Anthony Kennedy, was the author. In any case, no one will own up to it, perhaps because the *per curiam* is more a political act of will than it is a reasoned elaboration of constitutional law. Does this amount to a national disgrace? To answer that question, we have to dirty our hands in the mire of contemporary constitutional exegesis, Florida election law, and punch-card technology. This is not a task for the squeamish.

The *per curiam* opinion declared that the Florida Supreme Court, in ordering a hand recount of the many thousands of ballots in Florida for which the voting machines could not tabulate a vote, violated the 14th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which forbids any state from denying any of its citizens "the equal protection of the law." The denial

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of "equal protection," so the argument runs, lay in the failure of the Florida Supreme Court to declare a statewide standard to be used in counting, thus leaving unclear whether the recounters could find valid votes where there were dimpled chads, pregnant chads, swinging chads, hanging chads, *et cetera*. The resulting possibility for different standards, the Court declared, might be unduly prejudicial to George W. Bush, as Gore partisans proceeded to give Gore the benefit of the doubt with too many ballots.

This was novel Supreme Court doctrine (as Bugliosi and Dershowitz properly remind us), since previously only *voters* who had been injured had standing to sue for relief and since virtually every state in the nation allows a fair amount of vote-counting discretion at the precinct and county levels. As Dershowitz puts it,

> The implications of [the U.S. Supreme Court's] reasoning are so far-reaching that, taken to their logical conclusions, they would invalidate virtually every close election in our past and our future . . .

There is no doubt that there was vote-counting chaos in Florida, and since "equal protection" has a democratic ring and seven of the justices were willing to subscribe to the rationale, members of the Court must have felt it better from a public-relations standpoint to present America with a decision in which seven justices concurred, even if that decision were tough to defend. This was a political calculation, but one that failed to save the Court from its critics, who pounded on the fact that only five of the justices were willing to say the lack of "equal protection" meant that the recount had to stop. Two of the seven, Justices Stephen Breyer and David Souter, would have sent the case back to the Florida Supreme Court with instructions to come up with a uniform standard.

What Breyer and Souter conveniently ignored, and what the five others emphasized, however, was that the state lacked time to implement a uniform standard and still comply with a federal law requiring that electors be chosen by December 12, pursuant to a means of selection in place at the time of the election. This statutory directive, known as the "safe harbor" provision, provided that electors chosen in conformity with its provisions could not be challenged in Congress (which has, under the Constitution, the role of counting Electoral College votes) and was passed in the wake of a similar presidential election donnybrook in 1876. As only U.S. Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals Judge Richard Posner makes clear, the need to comply with the December 12 deadline is the key to understanding what the U.S. Supreme Court did, where the Florida Court went wrong, and why a much better legal rationale for the Court than the equal-protection argument exists—and was, in fact, advanced by the three justices (Rehnquist, Scalia, and Thomas) who wrote a concurring opinion. They argued that the Florida Supreme Court, in its two opinions in the controversy, had ignored the federal provision and had, in effect, changed the rules prevailing on election day. Thus, the state court had interfered with the desire of the Florida legislature to take advantage of the federal "safe harbor" provision.

When the smoke seemed to clear on election night, Bush was declared the winner in Florida by less than a thousand votes. Gore then conceded to Bush, only to withdraw that concession a few hours later when he realized that the closeness of the race would trigger an automatic machine recount of the Florida vote. When that recount inexplicably halved Bush's lead, Gore, rather than conceding again, made the decision that plunged the nation into weeks of uncertainty. He decided to protest the vote counts in four overwhelmingly Democratic Florida counties and ask for hand recounts, hoping that zealous—and primarily Democratic—vote counters would successfully troll for more Gore votes.

Bush argued that a protest required proof of an error in "tabulation," a term that Republican Secretary of State and now congressional candidate Katherine Harris, the Florida official assigned to interpret the election law, correctly read to mean *machine*, not *voter*, error. A *Democratic* Florida trial court judge upheld Harris's interpretation, but the Florida State Supreme Court overruled Harris and the judge. The Court held that a "tabulation" error could include a failure to count a ballot where the "clear intent" of the voter was manifest on the ballot; threw out the statutory deadlines for submission of recounts; and denied Harris the discretion Florida statutes gave her to enforce deadlines. In short, the Florida Supreme Court *rewrote Florida election law*. Bush then asked the U.S. Supreme Court to reverse the Florida Supreme Court, on the grounds that its rewriting of the election laws amounted to changing the rules after election day, in violation of the "safe harbor" federal statute.

Dershowitz, Bugliosi, and most Democrats (and thus, most legal academics) confidently predicted that the Supreme Court, which normally defers to a state court in the interpretation of that state's laws, would not intervene. But the federal justices took the case and, by a unanimous vote, vacated the Florida decision while gently suggesting to the Florida Supreme Court justices that they might have paid insufficient attention to the *federal* "safe harbor" law. In short, the justices told the Florida court it had made a mistake, and offered it the chance to rectify it.

In the meantime, though some of the recounts Gore had asked for were completed, one had been suspended at the direction of county authorities, and one had missed the new deadline set by the Florida Supreme Court. Katherine Harris then certified George Bush, whose lead had been whittled down by a couple of hundred more ballots, the winner of Florida's electoral votes. Gore had lost two machine tabulations, and a third (albeit incomplete) hand recount. Unbowed, he invoked another section of Florida election law and sought to "contest" Harris's certification of Bush as the winner.

To "contest" a certification successfully, as Posner explains, requires a showing that "legal votes" were "rejected by the precinct counters on whose totals the certification was based to such a degree to change or place in doubt the result of the election." While a "protest" proceeding (conducted before "certification") claims "tabulation" error, a "contest" proceeding is supposed to assert fraud or some other massive irregularity. Gore argued that the vote-counting machines had overlooked indications of clear voter intent and that, since other provisions of the Florida statutes suggest that a vote should not be declared invalid if "a clear indication [exists] of the intent of the voter as determined by the canvassing board," the fact that many precinct canvassing boards had ignored dimpled, pregnant, hanging, or swinging chads meant that they had failed to register the intent of voters. Because the vote was so close, Gore argued, the certification

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ought to be reversed, and additional recounts should be taken.

Once again, the Democratic trial-court judge ruled against Al Gore. Sensibly, he interpreted the "contest" statute to apply only to situations in which gross irregularities were suspected, not to close elections. By now, Gore had lost the original count, the mandatory machine recount, the certification, and the attempt at a "contest." He appealed, once more, to the Florida Supreme Court, which once more reversed the trial court and declared that "voter intent" was so important that, given the closeness of the election, Gore should be granted his "contest" and the certification should be nullified pending the outcome of statewide recounts.

This time, the Florida Supreme Court justices (all of whom were appointed by Democratic governors, six of whom were Democrats, and one of whom was an independent) split four to three, with the Florida chief justice, in dissent, warning that the Florida Court was changing the rules in violation of the federal "safe harbor" law and stood to be slapped down by the U.S. Supreme Court for ignoring that Court's directives. It looked as if the four-person Florida court majority simply favored Gore and had bent the law to accommodate his interests.

Almost immediately, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a stay of the Florida Supreme Court's second decision, halting the recounts. This was because, as Justice Scalia explained, Bush would be "irreparably harmed" by allowing a recount to go forward when some of the votes recounted might be illegal ones, thus tainting the validity of his election. (This explanation is hooted at by Bugliosi and Dershowitz, though defended by Posner.) Then the U.S. Supreme Court issued its December 12 opinion, ending the dispute.

Bugliosi and Dershowitz seethe with anger over the U.S. Supreme Court's action, not only because they, like the Florida Supreme Court, favored Gore (Dershowitz, to his credit, acknowledges his preference) but because they believe the justices should have deferred to the Florida court's interpretation of Florida election law. They have a point, given that, in most cases, the majority of the Rehnquist Court has taken the position that interpretation of state law is a job for the state courts. Dershowitz, Bugliosi, and other commentators who defend the Florida Supreme Court's action claim that the Florida Court's interpretation of the election code was simply part of its task of interpreting and resolving ambiguities and did not, therefore, justify intervention by a federal court. This argument fails to explain, however, how Democratic trial-court judges could so clearly rule that the statute contained no real uncertainties and that Gore's arguments were without merit. Indeed, if the Florida Supreme Court had followed normal court practice, they would have upheld the Florida trial courts in their rulings for Bush, since a higher court should not overrule a lower court that is not in clear error. It is hard to conclude that the Florida Supreme Court's majority was not influenced by its preference for Al Gore.

Are Bugliosi and Dershowitz correct in claiming that the U.S. Supreme Court majority's preference for Bush determined the outcome of its December 12 decision? The weakness of the equal-protection rationale (which almost no one, conservative or liberal, has seriously sought to defend) suggests as much. But Posner, admittedly a Republican appointee, argues to the contrary. First, he demonstrates that the Florida Supreme Court went beyond the traditional task of interpretation to rewrite Florida election law in violation of the federal "safe harbor" provisions. More importantly, perhaps, he explains why, apart from legal doctrines, there were good reasons for the U.S. Supreme Court to end the dispute on December 12.

Richard Posner is the premier expounder of judicial "pragmatism," the doctrine that what judges do is more important than what they say and that the proper judicial role is not simply the neutral application of preexisting law but the crafting of intelligent and efficient legal solutions to unanticipated dilemmas. *Breaking the Deadlock* is a fine introduction to Posner's jurisprudence, and even if you disagree with it (as I do), you may concede that, in this instance, pragmatism has some merit.

Had the Court refused to step in, Posner says, the Florida legislature, exercising its Article II constitutional power and confronting a Florida Court bent on helping Al Gore, would have appointed a slate of Bush electors. This action would probably have been ruled illegal by the Florida Supreme Court, which would then have mandated a slate of Gore electors, thus plunging Florida into a constitutional crisis that would have had to have been resolved by the U.S. Congress, by the Florida governor (Bush's brother), or—even more likely—by the U.S. Supreme Court in further opinions to be issued several weeks, or months, later. During all of this time, the United States would have been without a legitimately elected chief executive, possibly precipitating a domestic and foreign catastrophe. It was better, then–given the insubstantiality of Gore's legal case—to end the matter on December 12. The fact that Gore conceded almost immediately after the Supreme Court's December 12 opinion suggests that Posner may have gotten the practical situation correctly. Still, did the Court *really* do the right thing?

Not according to Bugliosi and Dershowitz, who ignore the possibility of disaster, had the justices failed to act, while pointing to Justice John Paul Stevens' dissenting remarks in *Bush* v. *Gore*. The majority's decision, Stevens said, "can only lend credence to the most cynical appraisal of the work of judges throughout the land." "One thing . . . is certain," Justice Stevens continued.

> Although we may never know with complete certainty the identity of the winner of this year's Presidential election, the identity of the loser is perfectly clear. It is the Nation's confidence in the judge as an impartial guardian of the rule of law.

Bugliosi and Dershowitz, employing the "cynical appraisal" Stevens lamented, claim Stevens' remarks prove what damage the highest federal court wrought. But if you actually read Stevens' opinion, you see that he is criticizing the majority not for casting doubt on the impartiality of federal judges, but for its opinion that the Florida justices *ignored the law*. It is, in fact, the partisanship of the *Florida* justices that the Supreme Court majority spotlighted, and that Stevens (and Dershowitz and Bugliosi) believe is better swept under the rug.

The bloody shirt of *Bush* v. *Gore* will doubtless be waved for years to come by law professors, and Bugliosi's and Dershowitz's screeds will succor them. Still, given Al Gore's and the Florida Supreme Court's spectacular intransigence (the *real* cause of this imbroglio), the U.S. Supreme Court probably did the best thing for the country, and Posner's book, finally, gets it right. c

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The Coming Ordeal

by Srdja Trifkovic

Does America Need a Foreign Policy?
by Henry Kissinger
New York: Simon & Schuster;
352 pp., $30.00

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This latest book by the former secretary of state illustrates the difficulty of separating a piece of writing from its creator (Alan Greenspan on macroeconomics, Bill Gates on information technology, Steven Spielberg on cinematography). Would a similar, slim volume attract national attention if came from an assistant professor at a Midwestern college? Would it be considered "important," a "*tour de force*," even "profound" by so many reviewers? Would it be deemed worthy of a *Chronicles* review?

The answers are yes, no, and yes. There are many books on foreign policy around, few that recognize the forest rather than just a few individual trees. Kissinger's stature and debonair arrogance combining the roles of a one-man think tank and a prophet are arresting, but even published under a lesser name, *Does America Need a Foreign Policy?* would have been noticed for its boldness and readability. Though Kissinger steps with gusto on many liberal toes, the dominant *bien-pensants* are obliged to be smilingly polite to him, even when it hurts.

The reason this book deserves scrutiny from those of us who advocate a "realistic" foreign policy—one based on American national interests, pragmatically defined—is its deeply deceptive nature. In the opening chapter, Kissinger advances a set of guiding principles with which we can have little quarrel—and proceeds to violate them with concrete policy recommendations (most notably regarding missile defense and NATO) that are fundamentally irrational and manifestly determined by his ideological prejudices. His *a priori* assumptions are apparent also in his failure to tackle the implications of the ongoing migratory deluge of the West and of the looming demographic collapse of European nations and their overseas descendants in the coming century. More remarkably still, he is either unaware of or indifferent to the deep moral and spiritual crisis of the Western world. The fact that a man of Kissinger's stature and influence does not deign to consider the possibility that we are at the edge of a cultural abyss is perhaps the most depressing feature of the book.

Kissinger opens by observing that the United States currently enjoys political, military, economic, and cultural preeminence unrivaled by even the greatest empires of the past. Its behavior occasionally evokes charges of American hegemony, yet its policies reflect either rehashed maxims inherited from the Cold War or domestic ideological schisms. The left sees America as the ultimate arbiter of domestic evolution all over the world. In their view, foreign policy amounts to an extension of U.S. social policy on a global scale; for the right, the solution to the world's ills is unabashed American hegemony. Kissinger rejects both "an attitude of missionary rectitude on one side and a sense that the accumulation of power is self-implementing on the other." The real challenge, he says, is to merge the traditions of exceptionalism by which American democracy has defined itself and the circumstances in which they have to be implemented, taking into account the structural differences between four main international systems in the world today.

The first of those—Europe and the Western hemisphere—is America's oyster. Peace based on democracy and economic progress rules supreme. "States are democratic; economies are market-oriented; wars are inconceivable except at the periphery, where they may be triggered by ethnic conflicts." On the other hand, the great powers of Asia—larger in size and far more populous than the nations of 19th-century Europe—treat one another as strategic rivals. Wars involving India, China, Japan, Russia, Korea, or Indochina are not imminent, but they are not inconceivable, either. The conflicts in the Middle East, by contrast, are akin to those of 17th-century Europe: Their roots are neither economic nor strategic but ideological and religious. Finally, there is Africa, which, with its chaotic ethnic conflict, poverty, and disease, has no precedent in European history.

Dealing with this variety of systems demands a subtlety Kissinger does not find either in congressional heavy-handedness or in the "ubiquitous and clamorous media that are transforming foreign policy into a subdivision of public entertainment." He attributes an additional reason for America's difficulty in developing a coherent strategy to several Beltway attitudes. Cold War aficionados favor hegemony for its own sake; Vietnam-era peaceniks suffer from a Clintonesque wooly-headedness that precludes coherent thinking; and yuppie technocrats believe that a national foreign-policy strategy is not required, since we can count on the pursuit of economic self-interest and globalization to produce global peace and democracy. So long as the post-Cold War generation of national leaders is embarrassed to elaborate an unapologetic concept of enlightened national interest, Kissinger warns, it will achieve not moral elevation but a progressive paralysis:

> Certainly, to be truly American, any concept of national interest must flow from the country's democratic tradition and concern with the vitality of democracy around the world. But the United States must also translate its values into answers to some hard questions: What, for our survival, must we seek to prevent no matter how painful the means? What, to be true to ourselves, must we try to accomplish no matter how small the attainable international consensus, and, if necessary, entirely on our own? What wrongs is it essential that we right? What goals are simply beyond our capacity?

In the tension between globalist-missionary impulses (the legacy of Woodrow Wilson) and hardheaded realism ("Jacksonianism"), Kissinger clearly bends toward the second. Wars or interventions, either to stop "atrocities" or to spread American values, should be avoided; a realistic attachment to the national interest—the art of the diplomatically possible—has greater potential to realize moral purposes. Kissinger illustrates his point with the example of the Balkans. In Kosovo, the Clinton administration had aggravated a bad situation in the name of "morality" and helped the Albanians' irredentist objectives, which extend beyond Serbia. In Bosnia, the "moral" position—the one that would have minimized suffering—would have allowed ethnic partition, rather than force three communities to remain in a quasi-multiethnic polity that had no precedent in history and no connection to any fundamental American interests.

So far, so good. The problems emerge

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in Chapter II, in which Kissinger discusses NATO and missile defense. Kissinger is a dedicated "NATO forever" enthusiast and a firm proponent of the missile-defense system. To him, NATO "still remains as an insurance policy against a new Russian imperialism." It must not lose its sense of purpose and dissolve "into a multilateral mishmash"; if it did, "both Germany and Russia would be tempted to view each other as their best foreign policy option."

Such views are problematic by Kissinger's own standards of America's national interest: A hard-boiled realist should have noted that missile defense has prompted an ongoing improvement in Russo-Chinese relations. Ever fond of historical parallels, Kissinger ought to recognize the similarity between the Russian-Chinese treaty of July 2001 and the *entente cordiale* between Great Britain and France of a century ago. That arrangement also was not a formal alliance to start with, as the Germans consoled themselves at the time. Nevertheless, it did have a comparable underlying logic in creating a pattern of relations that was to become fully apparent in August 1914.

By refusing to acknowledge that NATO and missile defense will perpetuate an open-ended and inherently adversarial relationship between Washington and Moscow, Kissinger activates a predictable, and possibly intended, paradox. The necessity to contain a potential threat from Russia—his fundamental reason for NATO's continued existence—distorts Russia's postcommunist evolution in favor of its traditional distrust of Western intentions. The realists who are now in charge in Moscow are not *a priori* "anti-Western," but they harbor no illusions about the West, either. Their strategic thinking now entails an unabashed reliance on nuclear weapons and their possible first use. This is detrimental to American security and cannot be offset by any conjectural benefit in maintaining an alliance that has outlived its usefulness. The only proper rationale for a country to enter into an alliance is to enhance its security. By prolonging Russia's status as America's adversary, NATO does the opposite. Even in its weakened state, with all its economic and demographic problems, Russia remains a nuclear power with thousands of nuclear warheads. If NATO is enlarged and America proceeds with its antimissile system, Russia will place more nuclear warheads on its ballistic missiles, and American cities will remain on the list of targets.

It almost defies belief that a "realist" such as Kissinger would fail to consider dangers to America inherent in NATO expansion. The United States is extending its security guarantee to new clients in Russia's geopolitical backyard. Theoretically, it is accepting the risk of an all-out war in defense of an area that has never been deemed vital to this country's interests. It is guaranteeing a host of disputed frontiers, which often were drawn arbitrarily and bear little relation to ethnicity, geography, or history. It is underwriting the freezing in time of a post-Soviet outcome that is not inherently stable, "just," or "democratic." America is submitting itself to a calcifying organizational framework that will make eventual adjustments—if and when they occur—more potentially violent not only for the countries concerned but for the United States itself, which does not and should not have a vested interest in preserving an indefinite *status quo* in the region.

Washington and Jefferson would be horrified; even Kissinger's beloved Metternich would frown upon this simply illogical policy, which means that the United States is seriously ready to risk a thermonuclear war for the sake of, say, Poland's border with Belarus. Has Kissinger overlooked the results of previous Western security guarantees in the region (for instance, Czechoslovakia's partition in October 1938, or Poland's destruction in September 1939), which provide a warning that promises nonchalantly given today may turn into bounced checks or smoldering cities tomorrow? Does he not recall the lesson of Locarno: that security guarantees that are not based on the provider's complete resolve to fight a full-blown war to fulfill them are worse than no guarantees at all?

Applying Kissinger's own theoretical framework (that of a pragmatically defined American interest), it is possible to make a strong case for the abolition of NATO, the withdrawal of all U.S. troops from Europe, and a partnership with Russia. For starters, this would boost Russia's democratic institutions, which would make its aggressive comeback unlikely. In light of September 11, it is obvious that Russia needs help to become the West's bulwark against the real threat to our common security, the new *antemurale christiensitatis*, as we enter a century that is certain to see a renewed assault by militant Islam—to which Kissinger is curiously oblivious—on an enfeebled Europe. America needs Russia's economic revival focused on its links with Europe, and a strategic understanding with Moscow based on the underlying common interest in keeping Islamic marauders at bay.

Kissinger does not notice that NATO's continued existence strengthens the unholy alliance of the very people he professes to despise, of all those one-world Wilsonians and neoconservative global interventionists who presently run the show in Washington. They have jointly invented a new mission for NATO: that of self-appointed promoter of democracy and protector of human rights. Its area of operations is no longer limited; its "mandate" is entirely self-generated. Its war against Serbia in the spring of 1999 marked a decisive shift in its mutation from a defensive alliance into a supranational security force based on the doctrine of "humanitarian intervention." This remarkable transformation has mirrored the longer (and almost complete) evolution of the U.S. government into a Leviathan unbound by constitutional restraints. The reinvention of NATO as the permanent iron fist of the ideology of neoimperial interventionism proves yet again the old adage—once advanced by Henry Kissinger himself—that foreign policy is an extension of domestic politics.

After reading Henry Kissinger's latest book, some Europeans may conclude that the latter-day, U.S.-led *Drang nach Osten* is a poisoned chalice that the Germans will accept only at their peril. They will be justified in suspecting that there is no better way to ensure American dominance in Europe in perpetuity than by preventing the long-overdue Russo-German *rapprochement*. Kissinger, who is frank about his desire to prevent this from happening, should be commended for his openness. The wisdom in seeking to prevent this historic step, however, is doubtful, since the reestablishment of a German-Russian rapport is the last prerequisite for a long period of stable peace throughout Europe. Kissinger wants to postpone it in favor of what is becoming—perhaps contrary to his wishes—a psychotic imperial utopia utterly divorced from the interests, political traditions, and natural inclinations of the American people.

Kissinger's views on NATO and his unwillingness to acknowledge the validity of arguments that do not fit his para-

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digm provide examples of ideological distortion legitimized by a value system immune to critical scrutiny. That Kissinger is probably unaware of the hierarchy of normative control that determines his own thinking does not mean he is off the hook. A "self-revising" analyst—a bold thinker unbound by institutional loyalties and personal ambition—would deliberately seek the distinction between values and norms. Critically examining norms—in this case, the continued utility of NATO as an institution—should not be mistaken for attacking core values—American national interests—and thus proposing a new hierarchy of control.

Kissinger's advocacy of a missile-defense system is an example of his ideological thinking. "With all respect for the views of allies and other important countries, the United States cannot condemn its population to permanent vulnerability," says Kissinger, a little pompously, before proceeding to list arguments against missile defense in order to refute them. He does not list—and, therefore, does not answer—the right ones: the terrorist threats that, after September 11, may well be biological rather than nuclear and that the method of delivery will be a smuggled suitcase rather than a ballistic missile. More importantly, Kissinger does not see—or, anyway, does not say—that the missile-defense "philosophy" assumes the desirability of global hegemony as the basis of U.S. foreign policy. Short of a radical change in that policy, a working nuclear shield above America would be the equivalent of giving a sniper a bulletproof suit.

Intellectually and technically, Kissinger's treatment of the "politics of globalization" is the least satisfying part of his book. "Globalization has diffused economic and technological power. Instantaneous communications make the decisions in one region hostage to those in other parts of the globe. Globalization has produced unprecedented prosperity, albeit not evenly." Missing the impact of globalization on national identities and cultures, Kissinger exudes what seems an unwarranted confidence that the behavior of nations will remain determined in the coming century by continuities of history and geography, thus implying that nations are here to stay as recognizable, and more or less constant, entities.

Kissinger ends by noting that great statesmen are distinguished not by their detailed knowledge but by "their instinctive grasp of historical currents, by an ability to discern amidst the myriad of impressions that impinge on consciousness those most likely to shape the future." It goes without saying that he believes himself endowed with that grasp. He is mistaken. Having spent most of his working life within the institutional and intellectual confines of Washington, D.C., Dr. Henry Kissinger is finally constrained by the limits those impose on his ability to discern what needs to be done now and what is in store for us all tomorrow. The result is a distortion of reality—impelled by habit or interest—that purports to explain to others what the author himself cannot understand. In the coming century, the world will be a much darker and unhappier place than Henry Kissinger imagines, and his recommendations are woefully inadequate to prepare America for the coming ordeal, at home or abroad.

Srdja Trifkovic is Chronicles' *foreign-affairs editor.*

Clark's Tale

by Derek Turner

Diaries: Into Politics
by Alan Clark
London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson;
389 pp., £20

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Alan Clark, who died in 1999 at the age of 71, was one of the Conservative Party's most iconoclastic, amusing, and controversial—yet thoughtful—figures. In a party top-heavy with temporizers and economic reductionists, in an age full of *angst*, his cheerful disregard for delicate sensibilities was a joy to behold, even when you did not agree with what he was saying or doing. Everything he did was fundamentally *interesting*, however ideologically indefensible or morally reprehensible.

His penchant for fast cars and adventure got him into the gossip columns, while his adultery was legendary—at one time, he was carrying on simultaneous affairs with a judge's wife and her *two* daughters. In the bars at Tory conferences, you can still hear delegates reminiscing fondly of Clark's gallant defense of English football hooligans and his arrest for demonstrating against live animal-exports, while his euphemism for lying—"being economical with the *actualité*"—has passed into common parlance.

Despite—or because of—his fame, Clark never attained particularly high political office, rising only as far as minister of state at the Department of Defence. His 1978 "certainty that I would be called upon to lead" must have rung hollow to him as he grappled with his fatal disease. We can only hope that the comment of Dennis Skinner (the leftwing MP who said to him, "You'll end up in despair—like me") was misplaced.

There are several other reasons for Alan Clark's lack of political success. First of all, as the *Daily Telegraph* put it, "his honesty, sense of humour and contempt for stupidity disqualified him from high office." Second, his upper-class background worked against him: His father was Lord (Kenneth) Clark, a distinguished art historian and the youngest director of the National Gallery. For decades, the Tories have been moving resolutely down-market, as the serried ranks of Heath, Thatcher, Major, and Hague testify, in an attempt to "broaden their appeal"—although to this day, Tory politicians are still often thought of as "posh," whatever their origins (*ergo* "out of touch"), while the privately educated, upper-middle-class Tony Blair (descended from the Plantagenets on one side of his family, and from Simon de Montfort on the other) is an honorary "man of the people."

Alan Clark had a greater interest in personal enjoyment than in serious politics: He often thought more about the intricacies of political plotting than its actual ends. He relished Westminster intrigues, saying in 1980:

> The Machiavellian undercurrents, the need to be permanently on one's guard, to know how to read the codes and smoke signals; how to assess people's real motives, and discount their superficial courtesies and protestations—is what makes the game here so fascinating.

Finally, Clark's unruffled surface masked a personality full of distracting doubts—about money, mortality, health, and sexual potency. As he asked of himself in August 1974: "Am I a Renaissance prince, a philosopher, or a big ageing dud?" Yet he attained greater influence and fame as an historian and, above all,

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as a diarist than he would ever have done as a career politician.

The first volume of his diaries, covering 1983 to 1991 and published in 1993, was promptly described by the *Times* as "one of the great works in the genre" for its "Pooterish self-assessment, for Mr Toad's enthusiasm for new things, for Byron's caddishness, for its deadly candour." It was not just the *Times* reviewer who delighted in this candid, bitchy, gossipy, snobbish, hypochondriacal, politically incorrect *tour de force*, or who compared Clark with Boswell and Pepys. Even those who detested his politics had to admit that there was something engaging and fascinating about the right-wing *roué*. Writing in the *Independent*, the left-of-center Robert Harris described the *Diaries* as "the most compelling account of modern politics I have ever read," while in the *Evening Standard*, left-wing journalist Matthew Norman confessed that "[Clark] proved beyond dispute that the Devil really does have all the best tunes." And so the subsequent volume, which covers the years 1972-1982, had been eagerly awaited.

Into Politics, therefore, should have been more of a hit than it has so far proved to be. All the essential ingredients are here—the illicit liaisons, the petty concerns about money and health (in April 1979, after a day of gloomy pondering on the forthcoming election, Clark finished, ludicrously, "Key factor, though, is elimination of dandruff"), the perceptive insights, the sly humor, the choice anecdotes, and minute, insulting descriptions of famous or soon-to-be-famous people: "Geoffrey Howe affects a curiously opaque, *café-au-lait* complexion. A combination, presumably, of sun lamp and TV studio foundation cream." (His June 1982 description of Princess Margaret was even more cruel: "fat, ugly, dwarflike, lecherous and revoltingly tastelessly behaved.")

It seems at least possible that the reason for the book's cool reception lies in some of the political content, since *Into Politics* is much more about politics than the first installment (which was really concerned with personalities). Also, some of Clark's political views indubitably fall well outside "respectable"—or even sensible—ideological parameters.

Writing in the journal of the Tory Reform Group, the ostensibly Tory Nick Kent fumed, "Alan Clark was a most unattractive man. Apart from being a gutter racist and serial abuser of women, he was the most mendacious of politicians." The *Diaries*, he added, would be "invaluable" for the "unashamed political s--t who just wants to get on." Coming as it does from one of Kenneth Clarke's pro-Euro faction, this is probably recommendation enough for many of his party. But because such visceral Tories do not generally write book reviews in the London press, the book has been treated with greater indifference than it merits.

The "gutter racism" decried by Kent may be the reason why some commentators appear to find Clark suddenly rather discomfiting. Here is a man of high intelligence, wit, humor, and sophistication saying the unsayable in such a way that it cannot be brushed off as a joke. More than once, fed up with the Tory Party, he thought of defecting to the National Front, at that time a serious third-party challenger (the party imploded after Margaret Thatcher's 1979 election victory). Such thoughts certainly are "gutter racism" by modern, far-left (i.e., mainstream) standards, but Clark compounded his thoughtcrime (and, sadly, nullified much of what else he had to say) by referring kindly to the Nazis.

Impelled by a mixture of boyish sincerity, vanity (he wanted to be talked about, and what was said about him was a secondary consideration), and humor, Alan Clark returned again and again to the theme. He was certainly being serious when he told the *Times*' Frank Johnson over a 1981 lunch, "I am a Nazi. I really [believe] it to be the ideal system, and . . . it was a disaster for the Anglo-Saxon races and for the world that it was extinguished." Rewatching *Cabaret*, Clark refused to swallow the prescribed moralistic dose about "tolerance" and why it is "OK to be gay" and liked best the "wonderful, uplifting scene in the beer garden, when the young SA boy leads the singing of *Tomorrow Belongs To Me*." But he admitted that he was acting "partly to provoke" when, at a Downing Street dinner in 1981, he teased a German guest, talking about Hitler being "ahead of his time" and of "the genetic need for racial purity." (The disputatious diatribe reduced the woman to tears.)

One of his parliamentary colleagues was at least partly right when he remarked that "Al should realise there's more to politics than being amusing." The fact that Clark got away with his outrageous opinions and statements is vivid proof that, in politics, it is less what you believe but whom you know that counts. It also says something for Margaret Thatcher that she would permit such a loose cannon in her government.

Despite his repeated lapses into such Jacobinism and his mocking humor, Alan Clark had a generous, traditionalist, ultraconservative view of the world. He was one of the few Tories who voted against entering the Common Market, surprising Dennis Skinner by saying that "I'd rather live in a socialist Britain than one ruled by a lot of f---ing foreigners" (April 1975). Seven years later, as a necessary corrective to national decadence—and as a magnificent *coup de théâtre*—he favored vigorous and early intervention in the Falklands: "If we are going to go, I feel, let us go out in a blaze—then we can all sit back and comfortably become a nation of pimps and ponces, a sort of Macao to the European continent." On a postwar visit to the Falklands, he wrote:

> Seeing all those dear little fair-haired children in their anoraks—exactly like any village in one's constituency—brought home more effectively than anything else could have done exactly what we were fighting for, and how impossible it would have been to have abandoned them to a foreign power.

He was also frequently pessimistic about his family's future, using terminology reminiscent of Jean Raspail:

> I get a dark foreboding, sometimes. I feel it at Saltwood [his family home, a medieval castle in Kent] as people encroach more and more, with higher sense of justification, on the boundaries and fences—"it's not right that something so important/beautiful/interesting/historic should belong to one man . . ." There are the boys [his sons] with their patriotic instincts quite natural, also the sense of privilege and assurance—but will they be able to hold it . . . ?

And, "Are we [his family] an etiolated rearguard? The French nobility in 1788?" (March 1974).

The death of one of his beloved beagles prompted Clark to think of his own dissolution:

> He was shrouded in his red blanket with his steel dish and dinner

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buried beside him. One must have faith, but haunting me is the endless journey, faster than the speed of light, of the soul into infinity.

(There is still much speculation about whether Alan Clark converted to Catholicism just before he died; he was an unexpectedly religious man, who often mentions God in the *Diaries*.)

His book ends on a high note, with Clark writing of his October 1982 visit to the Falklands, which he describes as "the most memorable and invigorating experience of my entire Parliamentary career." Such moments of unadulterated delight were all too rare in a career full of cares (usually self-inflicted), conspiracies (usually unsuccessful), and compromise (usual). Yet, when he was out of Parliament between 1995 and 1997, all he could think about was how to get back in. By then, he had long since given up any idea of *doing* anything; he just wanted one more go at playing the "game."

Derek Turner is the editor of Right Now!, *published in London.*

Frankly, My Dear . . .

by J.O. Tate

The Wind Done Gone
by Alice Randall
New York: Houghton Mifflin;
208 pp., $22.00

◆

The publication of *Gone With the Wind* in 1936 was a major event in publishing—if not literary—history, compounded by the overblown movie of 1939 and by worldwide sales that continue to this day. Margaret Mitchell was overwhelmed by the reaction, which was complex and multifold. The novel was read by people on both sides in the Spanish Civil War, and Mitchell received all sorts of letters showing she had struck a nerve. One German thought that she had intuited his experience of World War I and the economic slump that followed, and a French town wanted to make her a citizen. The resistance to *Gone With the Wind* seems to have come mostly from the Nazi Party, the Communist Party, and American liberals—a suggestive convergence. Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom!*, perhaps the greatest novel ever written by an American, was passed over for the Pulitzer Prize, swamped by the massive phenomenon of GWTW. Dissenters *did* object to the novel on racial and historical grounds: the stereotyping of blacks and the "Southern" rendering of Reconstruction.

The whole matter is of considerable interest, embracing as it does the problematics of writing and representation as well as controversial episodes in American history; still, we must admit that it is limited by the passing of the years. There comes a point when Scarlett O'Hara (or "Scarla O'Horror," as she is referred to in John Kennedy Toole's A *Confederacy of Dunces*) seems as quaint as Becky Sharp, on whom she was modeled. Been there, done that—though I must concede that I have met four women who were, or are, obsessed with Scarlett O'Hara. Three of them thought she was a great "female role model," which shows some of the depth of the book's insidious perversity. The poison in the heart of Scarlett O'Hara remains a challenge for some, giving us insight into the obsessive contamination inherent in this massive narrative about obsession.

Cashing in on GWTW is big business, that's for sure. Acting in the spirit of Scarlett O'Hara—if not of Margaret Mitchell—the Mitchell estate authorized the inert *Scarlett* by Alexandra Ripley in 1991 and has since had trouble arranging a sequel to that sequel. This year, Mitchell's heirs went to court to block the publication of Alice Randall's *The Wind Done Gone* on the grounds that it was an invasion of copyright; they lost when the judge upheld the publishers' claim that the book is a parody—"The Unauthorized Parody," as the dust jacket blares. That may be slick lawyering, but *The Wind Done Gone* is no parody. It is rather a rip-off and a revision, and a feeble and mechanical one at that.

Now, there's nothing wrong with a parody, if indeed *The Wind Done Gone* were one. And the tradition of revision is indeed the "inadvertent epic" that Leslie Fiedler has brilliantly claimed to be the core of the American tradition of sadomasochistic, racially inflamed melodrama, from *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to *The Clansman* to GWTW to *Roots*. Though there was much of mawkishness, there was no parodistic sense in that progression—quite the opposite, since a sense of humor would have ruined all the hokey solemnity and seriousness. Revision requires strength, imagination, and conviction, none of which are to be found in *The Wind Done Gone*.

Alice Randall's little squib is fatally dependent on the monumental model that it affects to invert. The bookette is the diary of Cynara, the mulatto half-sister of Scarlett ("Other"), by Mr. O'Hara out of Mammy. Cynara is the mistress of "R" (guess who!), the Dreamy Gentleman (guess again) is gay, and Cynara goes with a black senator to Washington. The diary form, obviously adopted to avoid the work of creating a narrative, is disastrous to the novel; and though this book can be downed in one sitting, there is no reason to do so, the revisionary work having been done so many times—and better—by authors black and white. Miss Randall was laboring not only in the shadow of Faulkner but of Robert Penn Warren (*Band of Angels*), not to mention Margaret Walker Alexander (*Jubilee*), Frank Yerby, and so on. And the recent film *Adanggaman* by Roger Gnoan M'Bala, portraying blacks enslaved by blacks in 17th-century Africa, is a powerful and provocative treatment of a subject that has been dealt with all too gingerly.

It makes sense that our history should be reinterpreted fictionally. But if GWTW is "offensive," then revision of that offense will require more than Alice Randall has given. If *Gone With the Wind* is a still a "problem," our nation must be in better shape than I had dared to hope.

J.O. Tate is a professor of English at Dowling College on Long Island.

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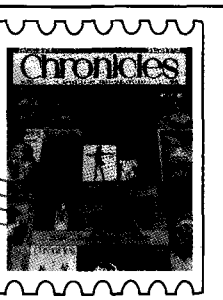

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by Samuel Francis

Enemies Within and Above

Within a few hours of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon last September, it had become commonplace for even high-ranking government officials and elected leaders to say publicly that Americans would just have to get used to fewer constitutional liberties and personal freedoms than they have traditionally enjoyed. Of course, that was hardly news, though it may have been the first time such leaders actually admitted that our freedoms are dwindling. Americans have been losing their liberties for several generations now and, for the most part, seem entirely content to do so. By the end of the week of September 11, some callers to radio talk shows were saying, quite literally, that they were willing to give up "all our constitutional rights" if only the government could keep them safe from terrorists.

The government seemed ready to oblige. Plans to expand wiretapping and surveillance powers were perhaps understandable, and bans on carrying scissors and razor blades on domestic air flights were not infringements of constitutional rights in any case, but some proposals went well beyond reasonable security measures. A week after the attacks, the *Washington Times* carried a front-page but none-too-accurate story headlined, "Wartime presidential powers supersede liberties," which argued that the President's declaration of a national emergency gave him authority to "impose censorship and martial law." It also misquoted the U.S. Constitution and garbled American history on the suspension of *habeas corpus*. "In 'cases of rebellion or invasion [when] the public safety may require it,' the Constitution permits a president to suspend the right of habeas corpus—as Lincoln did during the Civil War," the story reported.

In fact, the Constitution (in Article I, section 9) does permit the suspension of *habeas corpus*, but says nothing about permitting the president to do so. The suspension power occurs in the article that deals with the *legislative* branch, and the whole point about Lincoln's suspension of *habeas corpus* is that Chief Justice Roger Taney held in a famous ruling (*ex parte Merryman*) that only the Congress, not the president, had the power to suspend it. Taney cited precedents from both previous American presidents and jurists as well as Blackstone and the example of British monarchs. Nevertheless, Congress, under Radical Republican control, upheld Lincoln, who proceeded to lock up pretty much anyone he wanted as long as he wanted. As late as 1946, however, the Court overruled a presidential suspension of *habeas corpus* in Hawaii that lacked statutory authority.

Regardless of what emergency powers the president really has, the seeming eagerness with which Americans of all ranks and degrees were willing to surrender their freedoms was alarming enough for some civil libertarians to start squeaking in protest. The zeal to smother freedom also contrasted strongly with the silence about the massive immigration into the United States that made the terrorist attacks possible. In the week after the attacks, the FBI nabbed some 75 foreign nationals, mainly on immigration violations, who were suspected of having something to do with the massacres. The terrorist hijackers themselves—the "cowards" as various public leaders kept calling them (this from a nation that routinely drops bombs from 30,000 feet and pushes buttons on guided missiles hundreds of miles away)—were all foreigners who had entered the country more or less legally and had managed to function quite normally within the Arabic-Muslim subculture that has emerged in the United States as a result of immigration. Yet at no time did public leaders—who did not hesitate to inform us that the Constitution was essentially expendable—suggest that immigration should be restricted or that some immigrants and aliens already here should be kicked out.

Indeed, the ruling class not only never even mentioned immigration and its consequences as possible threats to national security, but it persistently insinuated that, for all the dangers of foreign terrorism, the threats of "racism" and intolerance were even more dangerous. The morning after the attacks, America Online posted a greeting that instructed its users to guard themselves against "intolerance" and celebrate diversity, and the graphic showed a young black man reading smilingly from a large book to several young white people, male and female. (Only whites harbor "racism," you know, and only blacks are able to cure them of it.) Whatever the dangers of global terrorism, the real enemies remained "racism" and the white people who practice it. In the next few days, news stories about "hate crimes" against Arab-Americans, Muslims, and even Sikhs competed with stories about the attacks themselves and their consequences. Both the president and the attorney general went out of their way to denounce such crimes and warn against any displays of intolerance against Arabs and Muslims, and President Bush even traipsed out to a local mosque, where he unbosomed various banalities about tolerance and stupidly remarked, of a religion that boasts of its warriors and its devotion to *jihad*, "Islam is peace."

Of course, attacks on Arabs and Muslims were as irrational and ugly as they were illegal, but, like much of the overreaction involving intensified security measures, the overindulgence in the rhetoric of tolerance may point to purposes other than controlling mass hysteria against aliens. What Americans were essentially being told by their leaders and the ruling class in general was that the American public identity was no longer defined by the Constitution or the liberties it protects but by immigration itself and the kind of country that refuses to restrict it. We can get along without the Constitution if we have to, but we cannot halt or restrict immigration without ceasing to be the country we are and want to be, the kind of country (the ruling class likes to pretend) that we always have been. As Angela Kelley, deputy director of the National Immigration Forum, remarked (in a statement that confirmed her genius for regurgitating cliches):

> We're a nation of immigrants. You couldn't try to solve the problem by attacking all immigrants without really attacking America at its core, and then you're giving the terrorists what they want.

Immigration and our willingness to accept it—not the Constitution and certainly not the historic identity of the nation—is now the "core" of America.

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From the perspective of the worldview and material interests of the ruling class, of course, that message makes sense. The Constitution, after all, is an 18th-century document reflecting the beliefs and interests of a long-defunct agrarian and mercantile ruling class and society, while mass immigration and the kind of society it shapes reflect the modern, post-industrial, globalist regime that breaks down all such distinctions and barriers—between nations, cultures, races, and religions themselves. The New World elite can easily get along without the Constitution and those pestilent rights it sets up, but it has to have immigration—not only for cheap labor but as a cultural battering ram to knock down the barriers that separate group identities and limit its power and reach. But the problem (one problem, at least; there are several other problems as well) is that the immigrants in general—and the terrorists of last September in particular—insist on keeping those barriers intact.

What soon emerged about the hijackers of the planes that smashed into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon made confetti out of the foolish vacuities about a "credal nation" and a "proposition country" that pro-immigration ideologues have been bandying about for decades. The 19 hijackers came to this country, lived in it for some years, went to school here, mastered Western technical skills (such as flying jetliners), spoke English, had families, got drunk in bars, joined athletic clubs, ogled girls in swimming pools, and behaved in superficial ways exactly like the Americans they pretended to be. In fact, they hated every man, woman, and child they laid eyes on; they hated them, in some cases, for years; and they were willing and eager to die to satisfy their hate. There was never any question of assimilation. Whatever "creeds" or "propositions" they assented to were not ones that defined this country or ones that most citizens of this country would even recognize. The hijackers were, and remained, enemies of the West.

The attack they perpetrated represented the first time in centuries that non-Western enemies have been able to inflict significant damage within the West itself. For more than a century, the Western peoples have been in retreat from the global *imperium* they created between the discovery of the New World and World War I; and in the 1960's and 70's, terrorists within Western states, acting as surrogates for anti-Western forces under the slogans of "anti-imperialism," managed to set off a few pipe bombs and occasionally knock off a politician. But not until this September have non-Western agents of non-Western forces been able to inflict major lethal damage within the main citadels of the West itself. Whatever the contributions of the pro-Zionist and often murderous foreign policy of the United States against various Middle Eastern states in the last decade, the world-historical clash of races and civilizations underlies the most recent attack—which is why allowing immigration on the scale we have permitted is suicidal folly.

Indeed, the hijackers represent precisely what Thomas Jefferson was talking about with respect to the dangers of immigration in his *Notes on the State of Virginia*. "They [immigrants, mainly European in Jefferson's mind] will bring with them the principles of the governments they leave," he warned,

> or if able to throw them off, it will be in exchange for an unbounded licentiousness, passing, as usual, from one extreme to the other. It would be a miracle were they to stop precisely at the point of temperate liberty.

Not the least of the problems of mass immigration is that the "principles of the governments they leave" will travel with the immigrants, along with the ancient feuds and hatreds those principles imply. The results are bad enough when one alien population fragment imports its beliefs and hatreds; when several do—from the Middle East, Africa, Latin America, not to mention Europe itself—the result will be chaos.

It is perfectly true, as the President and various other wise persons kept telling us after the attacks, that not all Muslims and not all Arabs are terrorists or haters of America and the West. But—once again—the point is not about "most" of anything. The point also is that *some* are terrorists and haters, and "some"—as few as 19—can bring the most powerful nation-state on Earth virtually to its knees. If these men were cowards, it is just as well the heroes have not yet been deployed. A related point is that the presence within a Western nation of an alien subculture creates an alternative social structure in which terrorists can operate virtually undetected, and it recreates the same cultural soil from which the fanaticism, hatred, and terrorism sprouted in the first place. It is perfectly true that most Muslims and most Arabs are not terrorists, but throughout Muslim history, from Marco Polo's Old Man of the Mountains to the present day, the use of the assassin's arts as regular modes of war has been commonplace.

To grasp the relationship between the terrorist attacks in September on the one hand and mass immigration on the other, and to understand the absolute refusal of the American and Atlantic ruling class to confront the relationship and to accept some restrictions on immigration, is a good deal more frightening than anything that happened in or after the attacks themselves. What the relationship means is that the terrorist enemy is already within the gates, and those who have appointed themselves guardians of the gates do not have a clue—not only about how to respond, but even that anything is wrong. Bombing "training camps" in Afghanistan, assassinating supposed terrorist "operatives," declaring war against somebody or something or everybody and everything, curtailing civil liberties, spending more millions on defense, and "unleashing" the CIA and the Special Forces will accomplish absolutely nothing if an internal subculture capable of breeding more terrorism within the belly of the beast is not eradicated.

What is even more alarming is that, not only does the ruling class have no clue to the danger it has allowed and even encouraged to blossom under its own nose, but it is incapable of perceiving the danger. Because its structural interests bind it to an open-borders immigration policy, to the erosion of national sovereignty and of independence and eventually of the nation-state itself, and to the managed destruction of all distinctive national and cultural identities, it is unable to see that the dynamic of its own interests leads logically to nursing the vipers who will destroy the ruling class itself as well as the society it is supposed to rule. If what remains of the real West—not the hegemonic system of reward and force that the World Trade Center and the Pentagon symbolize, but the Western peoples who still adhere to their real civilization—wishes to survive, it has to recognize that it cannot do so under the leadership of the New World elite. The West can survive only if that elite is removed from its hegemony and a new ruling class, rooted in and loyal to our real civilization, replaces it. c

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Letter From Rockford

by Scott P. Richert

From Here to Eternity

"Weapons—guns, knives, brass knuckles, cigarette lighters . . . " The young man's voice trails off. If he were not waving his metal-detector wand at us, I might think that he was offering to sell us a gun or two, not asking us if we were carrying any. "No, they're all in the trunk," *Chronicles*' assistant editor, Aaron Wolf, cracks, and our art director, Ward Sterett, and Art Johnson, a friend of the magazine and local political scrapper, laugh.

"This is new," I say to the security guard. "Did you have problems last year?"

"Oh, yeah, we always do. Just last night, a guy came in with a really cool pocketknife. It's mine now," he says, a smile breaking across his face. "Go on in."

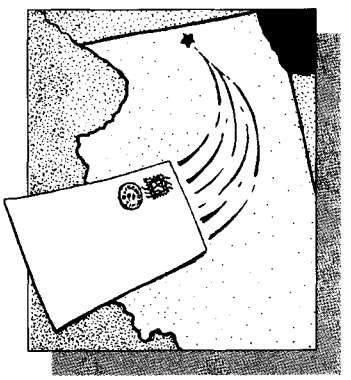
We step through the entrance of the old IGA supermarket in Roscoe, about ten miles north of Rockford and a few south of Wisconsin. Two high-school girls take our money—seven dollars apiece—and hand us each a coupon for a dollar off admission to their sister establishment, in a barn outside of Belvidere. "After you've gone through both, you get to vote on which one was better." After the discount, the other one is only $4.50. I already know which way I would vote.

We walk down an unlit hallway with walls of black-painted flakeboard, under a ceiling of black plastic wrap. As the light from the entrance vanishes, the hallway comes to an abrupt end. There seems to be no way out. "Seven dollars well spent," Aaron concludes.

"There must be an exit," the woman behind us says. "Feel around down by the floor. Maybe we have to crawl out."

Suddenly, to my left, the wall opens, and a tall, hooded figure appears, lit from behind. "Welcome to the House of Horrors," he intones, in the fake, monotonous British accent I remember from last year.

This is Aaron's and my second time touring the House of Horrors; while we got in very quickly tonight, we waited at least 45 minutes to enter last year, when it was held at an abandoned Logli's grocery store only a mile or two north of the city. The lines were even longer the first two years, when the House of Horrors was located in an old brick building in downtown Rockford. But that was before the



local Gannett paper ran its exposé. The House of Horrors, you see, is run by the Master's Commission, the youth pastorate training organization of Rockford's First Assembly of God. It is not a traditional haunted house but a variant on the "Hell Houses" or "Judgment Houses" that Christian youth groups across the country have been running for almost a decade. While there are plenty of tight spaces, a few snakes, a legion of demons, and—for some reason—an incredible number of insane clowns, the point of the scenes in these Christian haunted houses is to scare the customers straight. So, for instance, this year as well as last, the House of Horrors has several scenes on the dangers of drinking—not excessive drinking, mind you; just drinking. In one, a demonic bartender (again, with a British accent) entices his customers to spend their last few dollars on more alcohol. Predictably, one barfly becomes violent and scuffles with the police officer who is attempting to escort him from the bar. The drunk throws the officer up against the wall, grabs his gun, and shots ring out, as our mysterious guide hurries us out of the room into the next scene. Here, one of the other patrons of the bar is standing in the middle of a relatively clean garage, complaining that his wife is too lazy to clean it up. As we move on to the next scene, he bursts into the kitchen, where his wife is cooking dinner while their child cowers in the corner. After the father screams at his family, he raises his hand to strike his wife, the lights go out, and we are hustled along to the next scene. (Last year, the husband had not even had a drink—he beat his wife up simply for refusing to bring him a beer.)

This year's house is pretty tame. The first two years, the organizers were roundly condemned for including a grisly abortion scene, a staple of Hell Houses across the country. Even last year, they included a scene in an abortuary, where an abortionist gave a monologue in soothing tones about the quick, painless procedure that would set everything right. Noticing that Aaron and I snickered when he introduced himself as "Dr. Huxtable," he called out to us, "You wouldn't believe how few people catch that," as we made our way to the next room, where a distraught teenaged girl bemoaned falling for the doctor's lies and frantically slit her wrists. While this year's house includes a suicide scene, abortion is never mentioned—the girl is simply upset that no one "understands" her.

After a Columbine scene (a tall, strapping young man complains about being mistreated by his classmates, before killing several of them) and a few more insane clowns, we crawl into another long hallway and emerge, through a bottomless coffin, into a rundown graveyard *cum* open-air chapel, where two figures dressed like the ghost of Christmas past tell us we have "one final choice to make" and to "choose wisely." They then divide us into two groups (so much for choice) and send each group down a separate hallway. Both hallways lead to the same room, where stands yet another hooded figure with a fake British accent, a bushy goatee, and huge eyebrows. In his house, he tells us, there are no second chances. (So he's Satan?) But through his long years of experience, he has discovered that, while man is on Earth, he does have second chances, so we should choose wisely. (So he's not Satan?) As we are hustled out of the room into a long hallway with a pulsating light at the end, I ask him who he is supposed to be. He looks at me in bewilderment and walks away.

The light at the end of the tunnel is just above a door that leads to a spacious room with a large projection screen. After 20 or 30 seconds, a video starts, accompanied by pounding music. Words like "confusion," "anger," and "despair" fly across the screen, before a fuzzy image of three crosses on a hilltop appears. Then the video ends, and a young woman of about 19 steps into the room. "I'm here to tell you about Jesus Christ."

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The trouble with the House of Horrors (and similar haunted houses), the *Rockford Register Star* claimed, is that the organizers deliberately hide their intentions. Nothing at the House of Horrors indicates that it might differ from the few dozen other haunted houses in the area, and its website (*www.screamhouse.com*) simply proclaims:

> We will show you the unspeakable [*sic*] horrifying events that have brought human torture to new depths of depravity. We will challenge your way of thinking as well as strike fear into your heart. A fear that you will remember forever [*sic*]. The HOUSE OF HORRORS will give you a new taste of terror. It is definitely not for the faint of heart! Is it for you?

But the *Register Star* need not worry, because the Christian proselytism, though slightly stronger than last year, is still weak, muted. (Last year's evangelist never once referred to Jesus as Christ, but talked about sitting around in his room, "rapping" with his Friend.) We are the sum of our lifestyle choices, the young lady tells us. We can act the way that the people in the haunted house acted, or we can ask Jesus to help us act differently. The choice is ours.

That is all well and good, and the young lady's short speech does hint at elements of free will, prayer, even cooperative grace (though none of these are mentioned by name). But there is a little more to the Christian message than just that, and traditionally, Christian feasts around Halloween have emphasized precisely those elements of the Christian message that she leaves out. A few days after visiting the House of Horrors, I attend Mass at Rockford's traditional Catholic parish, St. Mary's, on the Feast of Christ the King (the last Sunday in October in the traditional calendar, the last Sunday before Advent in the post-Vatican II calendar). To the thunderous chords of Mark Dahlgren's organ, we sing the processional hymn:

> To Jesus Christ, our sov'reign King,
> Who is the world's salvation,
> All praise and homage do we bring
> And thanks and adoration.
> Christ Jesus, Victor!
> Christ Jesus, Ruler!
> Christ Jesus, Lord and Redeemer!

Noticeably absent is any reference to Christ Jesus, Listener, Christ Jesus, Counselor, or Christ Jesus, Friend and Best Buddy. One of the traditional hymns for the Feast of All Saints (November 1) continues the strain:

> By all your saints still striving,
> For all your saints at rest,
> Your holy Name, O Jesus,
> For evermore be blessed.
> You rose, our King victorious,
> That they might wear the crown
> And ever shine in splendor
> Reflected from your throne. . . .
>
> Then let us praise the Father
> And worship God the Son
> And sing to God the Spirit,
> Eternal Three in One,
> Till all the ransomed number
> Who stand before the throne,
> Ascribe all pow'r and glory
> And praise to God alone.

Yes, Christ does help Christians to make the right choices in life; He is, after all, the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. But unless we acknowledge Him as the King and Savior, Lord and Redeemer celebrated in the twin feasts of Christ the King and All Saints, we are missing an essential part of the Christian message.

H. Ward Sterett

A guest of Rockford's House of Horrors emerges from "new depths of depravity."

It is undoubtedly no coincidence that Hell Houses have become popular among evangelicals at the same time that Halloween has come to be viewed as evil. Here in Rockford, local churches and homeschooling groups promote "Christian" alternatives ("Harvest Parties") to the celebration of All Hallows Eve, and even some Catholics have gotten into the act, holding "All Saints' Day" parties, where children are supposed to come dressed as their favorite saint or "one of God's creations." (While both ghosts and demons are God's creatures, I doubt that a child who showed up in traditional Halloween garb would be welcomed.)

But what can we expect? From the eighth century on, the Feast of All Saints was considered one of of the major feasts of the liturgical year. Today, it is still a holy day of obligation for Catholics, but the pews have only a few more occupants than they do on a normal weekday, and most Protestants do not celebrate All Saints' Day at all. As the feast and its message fade from the Christian consciousness, Halloween, the solemn vigil of the feast (also celebrated from the eighth century on, though not with trick-or-treating), loses its meaning, too. Traditionally, Christians saw the Feast of All Saints (as well as Christmas, Epiphany, and Easter) as a time when the barriers between Heaven, Purgatory, Earth, and Hell became a little bit thinner, and we could catch a glimpse of the other side. (Thus, the *Christian* belief that demons prowl the Earth more openly on Halloween than at other times of the year, and the English tradition of telling ghost stories at Christmas, of which *A Christmas Carol* is only the most famous example.) Unlike Rockford's House of Horrors, that glimpse is truly terrifying, but it is also more likely to lead to real conversion. c

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Letter From Minnesota

by Mark Fellows

A Winter's Tale

◆

The funeral home looked better on the outside. The solid, dignified impression given by the white pillars standing guard outside the large double doors disappeared when you stepped inside and walked on old carpeting into a dimly lit room with dark wood paneling. Across the room were a pair of lime-green armchairs embossed with tarnished silver studs. One of the chairs held an old guy—probably the custodian. He was up for some company, and I wasn't in a hurry. He brought out hot, strong coffee. I gulped down as much as I could without scalding myself, hoping the warmth would raise my body temperature.

Up in northern Minnesota, he told me, they bury the dead in vaults above ground during the winter. Down here in tropical St. Paul, however, everyone goes underground. "Backhoes, power hammers, whatever it takes," he said cheerfully, explaining that, after machines pierced the frost line, winter gravedigging offered no special challenges.

"Are you the pastor?" he asked, nodding at the thick black book I held in the hand that wasn't holding the coffee. I shook my head. "I was his social worker." He nodded again: "Nice of you to come." He handed me a 2001 calendar card that, right under the funeral chapel's name and the American flag, listed him as the director. We talked a while longer, then he excused himself. He came back and said, "They're out there, in the new cemetery. You'll want to drive your car. Just park it behind the hearse. Take your coffee with you. They're probably waiting for you."

The wind hurled snow at my face as I hurried to my car. It started, and I took off, not bothering to turn on the heater. It didn't matter. It was one of those days where you just never get warm. I parked behind the white hearse, swallowed more coffee, and joined the huddled group of three men: the undertaker, his assistant, and an acquaintance of the dead man. The looks they gave me spoke for themselves: They *had* been waiting for me. We introduced ourselves and made small talk while the wind burned our cheeks and our toes went numb. The undertaker's assistant pointed behind us to some frozen flower bouquets sticking out of a mound of snow. "Did that one yesterday," he said. "A 14-year-old boy." Car accident? I asked. "Naw," he said, "He went into the hospital three years ago for surgery and came out a vegetable. Couldn't talk or nothing. A damn shame. It's a real blessing he died."

We turned to our coffin. It rested on two thick straps that wound around a broad, stainless-steel frame. At the proper time, the contraption would mechanically lower the coffin into the hole. Behind the grave, a chain-link fence separated the cemetery from the busy Highway 96. The undertaker asked if I wanted some prayers to be said. He deferred to me, I suspect, because the county I worked for was paying for the funeral, and he was unsure if I was attending as a mourner or to make sure county money was being well spent. Yes, I said, I would say some prayers.

I opened the Saint Andrew's missal, made the Sign of the Cross, and read aloud Psalm 129, the *De Profundis*, in English. We were about 30 feet from the highway, and I found my voice rising to compete with passing trucks and cars. A plane flew overhead as well, drowning out the plea: "Out of the depths I have cried to Thee, O Lord! Lord, hear my voice." Next I read the prayers in the burial Mass, ending awkwardly, it felt, with the prayer for absolution. A priest should be doing this, not me. But this was a county burial, not a funeral; besides, we weren't even positive the dead man had been baptized.

Part of the problem was that the dead man, when alive, often gave conflicting information about himself. I wasn't even sure his real name was Charles, although he answered to it. Different people got different stories about when Charles' birthday was, what his Social Security number was, which war he was in, whether or not he was married, whether or not he had children, and so on. He wasn't trying to confuse people; *he* was confused. Years of drinking had given him a wet brain. Charles was staying at a homeless shelter in St. Paul until he started heaving up blood. At the hospital, they discovered he had lung cancer; after they took out half his lung, they discovered he was demented. Charles was discharged to a nursing home to recuperate from the surgery. He recovered so fully that he started assaulting people. He was taken to the psych ward. The county diagnosed him as mentally ill and told me to find him another place to live.

The last year of his life was spent in a different nursing home. Charles stopped fighting; other than stealing cigarettes and staying out late, he was a model resident. He developed prostate cancer. Then his kidneys went out. Charles became too weak to loiter on University Avenue. For his own protection, he was placed on the locked unit. Like a caged bird, he wilted. The last time I talked to him, he recognized me but was too weak and confused to say much. I didn't tell him things would be okay, though, because he wasn't *that* confused.

There's no remedy for renal failure, but Charles rallied briefly. He even ate solid food for a few days. On Sunday night, the staff took his vitals (pulse, blood pressure, heart rate), and his signs were good. He lay down in bed, and, less than two hours later, he died, very quietly, alone. Because of the state of Charles' health, most of his clothing was destroyed. The nursing home was so thorough that Charles had no burial clothes. Not that it mattered: His was a quick, closed-coffin burial without family, friends, coworkers, or nursing-home staff. There weren't even any enemies. Charles left the world wrapped in a winding sheet and nothing else—nothing I knew about, anyway.

The acquaintance at Charles' burial was a retired bus driver named Bruce, who talked to Charles a couple times while visiting Charles' roommate at the nursing home. After I finished the prayers, he sang a verse of a Swedish hymn in a clear, strong tenor voice. I couldn't pronounce the name of the song (translated, it was something like "God holds all of us in His hands"). Bruce told me of the night Charles said to him, "I know I'm dying, and I want to get right with God." Bruce said, "I sat with

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Charles, and we both prayed, and he accepted Jesus as his personal savior." He added quietly, "It was the kind of meeting I dream about."

We watched the coffin descend into the dark hole, slowly and very quietly. The traffic continued to zoom by. The undertaker shook our hands and left, leaving his assistant to complete the burial. Bruce made a joke about his mother calling *De Profundis* the "scuba diver's prayer." I stared at him. Then, for some reason, I told him that I had prevented Charles' body from being cremated. He shook his head in irritation. "It doesn't matter what happens to our bodies. We are spirit. When we rise again, we get glorified bodies. The Bible says, 'The sea will give up its dead.'"

I wasn't sure how all those thoughts were connected to one another. I thought about explaining the anti-Christian origins of cremation, how the cremation societies of the 19th century were Masonic in origin; their motives were to emphasize materialism and de-emphasize the religious dogma of the resurrection of the body. Instead, I tried a more familiar response, remarking that St. Paul called our bodies temples of the Holy Spirit. "Yes, if you possess the Holy Spirit," he said, with a glint in his eye. Fair enough, I thought. (Later, I wondered if he had directed that at me. Being a former Protestant, I find Protestant suspicions somewhat refreshing—much preferable to the insipid ecumenism some of them have fallen prey to). I looked him square in the eye, shook his hand, and smiled. "One day, we'll know for sure." I left him there, at the graceless burial site, to mull it over. It was another banner day for the New Evangelization.

Charles was not merely materially unencumbered when he left this world. His sole spiritual sustenance was equally meager: the groping of a Protestant passerby and the hope-against-hope prayers of his Catholic social worker for his soul. It was oddly fitting that he died on December 10, the Feast of Our Lady of Loreto. Loreto, Italy, is the site of the Holy House of Nazareth, said to have been transported there from Nazareth by angels. Maybe the prayers for Charles, who had spent his last years homeless, persuaded Our Lady to bring him to his real home. Yes, it's a long shot—a real long shot. But to deny the possibility of prayer changing a soul's destination is not to be Catholic. Besides, winter has set in, and it's already tough enough to feel warm.

Mark Fellows writes from South St. Paul, Minnesota.

Letter From Rome

by Michael McMahon

In the Footsteps of St. Francis

◆

I only believed myself close to death once on my Holy Year pilgrimage in the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi. I had been walking in the sun for seven hours along the ancient footpaths and cart tracks between Gubbio—where the saint tamed the wolf that had been terrorizing the townsfolk—and Valfabbrica, the only village of any size before Assisi itself. I was lost. There was no one to ask the way; I hadn't seen a soul since breakfast. Whoever had been paid to put up the wayside signs that mark the *Sentiero Francescano*—the Footpath of St. Francis—had clearly had enough of struggling across the steeply undulating landscape with his paint-pots and finger-posts and had abandoned the task when the going had got tough. If he had been as hot and tired as I was, I thought, I could almost forgive him. My backpack felt so heavy that I dare not take it off for fear of not being able to pick it up again, and I had run out of water some four hours earlier. The slow-moving River Chiasco offered no relief—in high summer, it runs brown and undrinkable through uncrossably wide slabs of mud.

When I got halfway up the stony track that climbs the western side of the gorge, I realized that I just wasn't going to make it to the top. I slackened the straps on my rucksack, lay down across the shadeless road, and fell asleep. Everybody has to die somewhere, I remember thinking, and a remote corner of Franciscan Umbria is a better place to do so than most. I recalled that it wasn't far from here that St. Francis himself had been set upon by robbers, beaten, stripped of his clothes, and left for dead in a ditch. In the event, he survived; I wondered whether I would be as fortunate. I was. Two teenagers out on dirt bikes found me, looked at me with disbelief, helped me to my feet, and told me that I was only a kilometer from a village: Castello di Biscina. When I got there, the first person I saw was a gardener setting up a sprinkler to water a lawn. I must have looked as desperate as I felt, for before I could ask, he disengaged the hose and handed me the end of it so that I could drink; while I drank, he pointed out the track to Assisi. If he was wondering why a fat, unfit, 45-year-old foreigner was dragging a backpack across the countryside in high summer, he was too polite to ask.

Had he done so, I would have replied that I had been moved to make my pilgrimage by a chance encounter with a book. I had come across Harold Elsdale Goad's *Franciscan Italy* in the spring, when I had been dusting the bookshelves in my study. It had been sitting there for some 15 years, along with a couple of yards of ancient religious travelogues and works of spiritual counsel that I had inherited from a distant relative. In all the time I had owned it, I had not yet opened it. When I did, I was captivated. The binding, paper, typeface, illustrations, and even the smell of it somehow took me not just to Umbria but to the Umbria of 1926, when the book had been printed and published; the text took me thence to the landscape lived in by St. Francis 700 years before that, suggesting it had only changed a little since then. And when I read that, "for the pilgrim who is a good walker with sufficient Italian to ask his way, there is nothing more delightful than to follow him, if possible as far as Gubbio," I felt that those words were addressed directly to me.

I responded quickly to this call because last year was a Holy Year: Pious exercises undertaken at such times earn double spiritual air miles for the faithful. My own faith being less full than it had been, such an opportunity seemed attractive. For some time, my spiritual pilot light had been guttering and flickering, and I had been thinking that I should do something about it before it spluttered out

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entirely. So, as I turned the last page of the book, I resolved then and there to make a roughly planned pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi, flying to Italy and walking as far as time allowed on the paths that had been trodden by St. Francis. I would leave it to Providence to look after all the details and to make sure that things turned out safely for the best.

My pilgrimage certainly kept Providence busy. On any number of occasions, I was rescued from disappointment and disaster. On the only occasion I would get to see Gozzoli's frescoes of the life of St. Francis at Montefalco, I arrived as the church was about to close; there was no way my schedule could allow me time to wait for it to reopen. Seeing my disappointment, the doorman let me in "just for ten minutes." I was disappointed to find the apse filled with scaffolding: The paintings were being restored by a team of experts. But they had just gone to lunch, so I was able to climb their tower unchallenged and get as close to the paintings on the ceiling as Gozzoli had been himself.

When I stupidly lost the path after Valfabbrica, I found myself following the main highway to Perugia for miles, picking my way through roadkill and Coke cans while container lorries tugged at my backpack with their slipstreams. But when I cut back toward Assisi at Planello, I encountered delights that I would otherwise have missed, including the intricately unrestored castle of S. Gregorio, with tall, woody weeds growing from the broken line of its battlements, and a gatehouse topped by a grinning overhang with slits through which boiling oil had once been poured onto less-welcome visitors. A few hundred yards further on, as I sat down under a wayside shrine for my lunch, the Angelus bells jangled and tinkled across the countryside to put my enjoyment of the landscape in context.

Perhaps the greatest good fortune I enjoyed—in matters practical, that is—was to have been able to find and follow so much of the Franciscan Footpath at all. On one of the colorful maps I had obtained from the tourist office, the *Sentiero Francescano* between La Verna and Gubbio is not marked, and though the leg between Gubbio and Assisi is boldly represented by a fat line running in a zigzag between them, the more detailed map shows it running straight. And the larger-scale map I had been given was a black-and-white photocopy. Without color, whether the lines on it represented roads, paths, railway lines, rivers, or boundaries was anybody's guess. Worse, the elaborate wayside signboards that mark the key stages of the route itself display not directions but lyrical descriptions of the landscape. And though they are invariably placed at junctions or crossroads, not one that I found gave even a hint as to which direction to turn. Just as frustrating was my discovery that the route is considered to run north from—not south to—Assisi, so the few fingerposts that I did find at junctions only pointed back the way I had come, leaving me to guess which way to go next.

Yet, somehow, none of this mattered. I found myself inspired by an irrationally calm confidence. Even when I thought my number was up near Biscina, I was strangely unbothered by the prospect. There is something about a walking pilgrimage that stills the mind and soothes the spirit. It is as if the distractible part of the imagination is busied with controlling the physical effort required, leaving the rest of the mind calm and at peace. There is a sense that you have somehow conquered time, which no longer naggingly reminds you that a beautiful sight, sound, or smell is transient. On a pilgrimage, such pleasures are enjoyed from a moving perspective: The pilgrim moves on before the beauty has had time to fade.

And the beauty of Umbria is timeless, even if it is no longer quite that suggested by the half-tone photographs published in *Franciscan Italy* in 1926. Gubbio has been overenthusiastically restored only recently, and last year, Assisi's streets and buildings were still braced with the brass-knuckled scaffolding that had been put up after the 1997 earthquake; and though every town of any size has long been besieged or invaded by the motor car, the places in between are much as they must have been for centuries. It really is possible to lose oneself in the landscape and sever contact with the business and the burdens of contemporary life. And it is in the landscape more than in the basilicas, shrines, and convents that one finds the spirit of St. Francis, for whom the earth, sky, sun, moon, and stars were brothers and sisters, and who spent his life keeping material possessions at bay. The buildings that St. Francis knew—including the church at S. Damiano, which he helped rebuild with his own hands—seem to spring from the landscape, their soft-edged architecture in gentle harmony with the soil.

What a disheartening contrast I found in Rome, where spirituality seemed to lie entombed under the cold, angular, marble-and-gilding triumphalism of the Baroque. But that glorious, infernal, eternal city was not quite the last stop on my pilgrimage. Between it and Ciampino airport lie the S. Sebastiano Catacombs, and, having met up with a friend who had been following me at a distance in his car, I planned to make a brief visit to them before I had to check in for my flight. Dense traffic and irrational signposting nearly defeated us. We got to the catacomb entrance ten minutes after the last tour should have departed. But it hadn't: The tour guide was late, too, arriving just after we did. So I was able to mark the end of my pilgrimage by taking 20 steps down and 1,600 years back into the tomb-warren of the early Christian community. On one of the tunnel walls, I saw a marble tablet carved with the outline of a fish. When the guide wasn't looking, I ran my finger over it. It was wet with condensation. Without thinking, I crossed myself. It was one of many blessings I encountered on my pilgrimage in the footsteps of St. Francis. Perhaps the greatest of them all is the knowledge that, even if I am never again in Franciscan Italy, there will always be a little of Franciscan Italy in me.

Michael McMahon is a freelance writer who lives in Norfolk, England.

Letter From Texas

by Wayne Allensworth

Been There, Done That

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It is a beautiful April evening in Hico, Texas. My wife and I are having dinner with my in-laws, and I am eyeballing a statue of Billy the Kid across the street from Lilly's Restaurant. Hico, you see, was the home of "Brushy Bill" Roberts, widely believed around these parts to have been the notorious outlaw/folk hero, who, according to the "Hico Legend of Billy the Kid," escaped the long arm of the law and lived out his golden years right here in Hico. Our waitress, a pretty, blue-eyed Hico native named Ann, says that Billy the Kid groupies flood the place for an annual Billy the

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Kid/Brushy Bill talkfest. My father-in-law, however, insists that Pat Garret sent The Kid to a Wild West version of Valhalla way back when. Personally, I favor the Brushy Bill story, having learned from John Ford that it's better to print the legend. Ann says her father witnessed Brushy Bill's passing (he apparently died of a heart attack on a Hico street). It's a story she grew up with, and she tells it with a certain flair.

Ann turns out to have learned as much in her 21 years as I've managed to pick up in 42. Hearing that we are planning a return to the Lone Star state after a ten-year exile in occupied (Northern) Virginia, she tells us about her (brief) sojourn in the wilds of Manhattan, where she went to plan her wedding to a young man of Northern extraction. Her grandmother was scandalized ("You're gonna marry a Yankee?!"), but Ann, perhaps swayed by visions of the Great White Way, went ahead with the plans anyway. Dubbed "The Yankee" by Ann's relations, the obtuse Manhattanite, according to his former fiancée, wasn't the least bit perturbed by the obvious insult, which should have told her something about his upbringing. So Ann went to New York City and was promptly labeled "honky" and "cracker" by various "people of color" she encountered in the asphalt jungle. Being a girl of good character and knowing what she was about, Ann returned the engagement ring to His Yankeeness (who apparently saw nothing wrong with these obvious insults, either) and caught the next plane for Texas. Been there, done that.

I'm feeling good. The conversation is lively, the food tasty, the Shiner Bock (the real "National Beer of Texas") ice cold, and a young Texan has returned home. Been there, done that. It's almost enough to instill a little hope about our country's future in my jaded mind. The countryside is prettier than I ever remember seeing it. The drought is over. Generous rains and a cool spring have filled the tanks (Texan for livestock watering holes); the creeks are flowing; and the wildflowers—the Indian Paintbrushes, Bluebonnets, and cacti—are in full bloom. The land is as green as it was in all of my visions of an ideal Texas landscape—even greener. I'm coming home.

It's not something that's easy to explain to my colleagues, much less to my supervisors at work. Some think I want to telecommute from Texas merely because real estate is cheaper here. Others think I'm looking for another job. From their point of view, it simply doesn't make sense to forego promotion, possibly lose contact with my "consumers," and ruin my "career" simply because I want to go home. The looks I'm getting are something like that deer-in-the-headlights stare you always hear about. They must be wondering, "What's he really up to?"

I wonder that myself sometimes. In the end, all you can really leave your children is an example of how to live. Everything we have is in Texas: family, friends, an old house or two, and that feeling normal people have when they know they are home. It's not the place it was when I was boy—much less when my father was a boy—but it is still *home*. People like Ann have helped keep it that way.

Wayne Allensworth, a native Texan, swears that Brushy Bill Roberts was Billy the Kid.

Letter From Inner Israel

by Jacob Neusner

Who's Afraid of History?

◆

L.A.'s Conservative Rabbi David J. Wolpe chose Passover to surrender the claim that "positive-historical Judaism" (a.k.a., Conservative Judaism) builds the Judaic religion on established facts of history. History proves the Exodus never happened, he proclaimed on Passover, with perfect unfaith and to the hurrahs of other theologians of the "eat-kosher-but-think-traif" camp of Judaism.

His faith in historical knowledge exceeds imagining, for historians and archaeologists cannot really tell us much about the remote past or even yesterday. The material culture they reconstruct attests to broad patterns of conduct, not to particular transactions or events. Without the guidance of textual evidence, much that archaeologists find remains mute. And textual evidence rarely supplies the hard facts that indicate who really said what or performed a particular deed, the facts that critical historians require to establish certainty: It happened, or it didn't happen. Still, it is much easier to say what *did* happen than what *did not* happen, as Rabbi Wolpe seems to want to do.

"Critical history"—whether based on how historians read texts or how archaeologists dig in the dirt—is hardly so secure as to challenge the factual basis of matters to which critical history has no access. Most of the important points of the Torah concern things that do not yield the kind of sticks-and-stones evidence that critical history requires. Therefore, statements of what did or did not happen represent an act of arrogance joined to an excess of credulity in the claims of "science."

Arguments from silence rarely enjoy the enthusiasm that Rabbi Wolpe brings to them; after all, you cannot prove a negative. Rabbi Wolpe was careful not to specify the evidence that would prove the principal propositions of the Exodus—for example, proof that God instructed Moses to do such and so, archeological evidence that the Red Sea parted before fleeing Israel, and the like.

The Torah camp, challenged by historical and archaeological pronouncements contrary to the narrative of the sacred text, reasonably responds: "They don't believe; we do believe." And the Torah camp builds on a solid basis: There is no more compelling evidence against the veracity of the Torah than there is for it. But the Torah's reliability rests on its origin in God's self-manifestation.

That simple statement captures what is at stake. Archeology thinks it can prove or disprove that to which its methods and inquiries do not pertain. And that is most of what Scripture is about. No Exodus? Who declares what will count as evidence? Next they will tell us Adam never lived, as though they could show that he did. How do they know they are right, and what evidence would serve to prove them wrong? These are standard questions of criticism. Those of us who work in the past answer them every day.

What material evidence would serve to disprove the Torah's account of Moses's encounter with Pharaoh, or Israel at the sea? Where are the records of Pharaoh's conversations, the stenographic reports, the tape recordings, the videotapes from his entire reign from which Moses is missing? Was CNN's camera on the shores of the sea on the 15th and 16th of Nisan so long ago? If so, we might be able to pronounce the Torah's record false.

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Absent such reliable records of what happened, how are we to know what did not happen? Much that archeology says about the written account represents a massive argument from silence. The Torah camp responds out of the Talmud: "*Lo raiti, lo zu raiyah*" ("'I saw nothing' is no proof"). Why would a rabbi disrupt the social order of Los Angeles Judaism at Passover on the basis of such a feeble grasp of how history and archeology conduct their inquiry? What can come as the encore for the New Year?

Perhaps we may now anticipate a pronouncement that archeology cannot find the altar on which Abraham bound Isaac, and thus Rosh Hashanah, when Genesis 21-22 is read in the synagogue, must be cancelled.

One last point: What made the message so urgent as to require Rabbi Wolpe's solemn pronouncement, on the morning after the Passover Seder was celebrated in the homes of Israelites all over the world, that the Exodus commemorated the previous night never happened? I listened to a tape of the original sermon, which scandalized the Jewish world, and found his stentorian tones, revealing long-hidden secrets of fraud in Scripture, remarkably pretentious. Time and again, he announced that "truth" trumps "false faith." The tape also conveyed, in the questions of the congregants, the shock and hurt that the sermon imparted. The only justification I could imagine for raising the issue on that day in that way would be Rabbi Wolpe's intention to resign from the rabbinate of that synagogue, and from the rabbinate altogether, on grounds of a massive change of heart and mind on the truth of the Torah that he had hitherto espoused. But that is not what happened.

What happened was just the passing of another day. What else is new beyond the boundaries of the Torah camp of Judaism today?

Jacob Neusner is research professor of religion and theology and senior fellow in the Institute of Advanced Theology at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York.

Letter From Baltimore

by Brian Kirkpatrick

A Message for Boys

◆

The steamy morning reminded the congregation that Baltimore is on the shore and was once considered part of the South. The heat and the elderly substitute for the vacationing rector made the service informal and cozy, but if I had known the small church didn't have air conditioning, I might have chosen some other Sunday to visit. The regulars knew how to deal with the heat: The women wore sleeveless tops and dresses; as for the men, I was wearing fully half the congregation's allotment of ties. I was the only one to try one of the little spade-shaped wicker fans tucked in with the prayer book and hymnal. The regulars didn't bother, knowing that expending the required energy would just make them more miserable.

The woman seated across the aisle from me had her toddler dressed for the weather, in a seersucker jumper with short legs. The little boy had a cheerful, angelic face surrounded by thick, dark-blonde curls. His jumper, bare feet, and luxurious curls made me wonder if his mother had hoped for a girl.

During my medical training, they told me the name for what this little boy was doing, but I had forgotten it long ago. Still, the idea came back to me as he acted out an intense, heartfelt little chapter from a textbook on child development. He bumped into his mother, making sure he got some acknowledgment—a smile, a hug, a quick whispered game of peek-a-boo—then he was off. The point of the game was to see if he could find his way back to her. And what a game! The long canyons formed by the pews that towered over him, strange but smiling faces, the occasional snag in finding his way back to his mother—all added a little spice. A woman near 30, sitting with her own mother, brought him back once when he got lost, but the boy's mother calmly let him go again as soon as he was ready. At the exchange of the peace, when the congregation gathered in the aisle to talk and shake hands, a few hugging one another, three or four of the adults reached down to touch the boy's springy curls. Ignoring their hands, he continued weaving among the dresses and trousers.

During one of his stops for emotional refueling, his mother stepped two rows back to say hello to an older woman. He watched her, clutching the pew, his face a jumble of emotions. It was all right if *he* left Mom, but no one said *she* could go anywhere! He wasn't sure whether to cry, run after her, or struggle to wait her out. Fortunately, she came back quickly, and his smile was brighter than the sun, which couldn't quite push its way through the Baltimore haze.

After the peace, two men marched up to the altar for the offertory plates, one touching the little boy as they passed. The men left the altar and worked their

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way back, pew by pew, collecting money and checks, and then disappearing behind me. When the priest raised his hands and they swept back up the aisle to the altar, one of the men had the boy on his hip, the plate in his other hand. At the altar, the toddler's head snapped forward to watch as the priest took the offering, lifted it to eye level, and spoke in a loud voice. Tall candles in silver holders, a golden cross, dark, decorative wood behind the priest, stained glass above their heads: The little boy was enthralled. I thought of my own son, similarly captivated at a few months' age when a man in a gown had taken him from his mother to rub a damp cross on his forehead. *What are they up to? What is this all about?* If the man with the offering plate had spoken to him as they went forward, the little boy would have thought the ride mundane and restrictive. The man's silence and refusal to look at him made all the difference.

The man who had spontaneously picked up the boy was wearing the only other tie in the room. Only a very poor Christian would have thought that there was something a little too prim about the man, a little too dapper—my thoughts precisely. Worse, I wondered if his hair were dyed, then decided he was wearing a toupee. Watching as he handled the toddler with such skill, I regretted my wandering mind. Acting like a man, this dapper congregant had brought about a moment of grace.

As for the boy, I had mixed feelings. He had been quiet, demanding no attention from the rest of us, going about his explorations—his work—with great seriousness. His face conveyed his joy in those daring forays away from his mother, and who wouldn't share it? He was charming now, but in another year, or perhaps just another week, the scene will be quite different. Loud talking, crying, demands: In six months, he will be two, and what he wants will interfere with what the adults are doing. We will need to respond to him differently then; left unchecked, spontaneity becomes selfishness, and curiosity doesn't grow into reverence or awe. If you want a boy to develop compassion, sometimes you have to tell him he's not the center of the universe. If you want him to consider something sacred, he needs to hear there is something more important than he is.

The day before I visited that church, I had been at the mailbox in my building when two teenage girls came up and demanded to know if I needed anyone to baby-sit for me. "Do you have any kids?" No introduction, no greeting—they just started firing questions at me, at a volume I considered a shout. If I had needed any baby-sitting, I wouldn't have entrusted it to these two. Manners have their flaws as outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual states of mind, but I intend to keep using them in forming my judgments.

Perhaps someday, though, I'll learn not to judge men by their toupees. The dapper gentleman had worked an exercise from another textbook, this one concerning the civilizing of the barbarians we call our children. He knew that the boy's explorations—his need for adventure, his sense of fun—had great potential for good, if only some way could be found to sweep them up into something older and larger. There was love and a sharing of the little boy's joy in that decision to carry him forward with the other offerings to the altar. There was also, in that sagacious ignoring of him as the men walked up the aisle, a demand that the boy begin the great struggle of living a life with some discipline.

When a boy takes appropriate steps away from his mother, he should be encouraged; boys must move away from their mothers in order to become themselves. Better the prying away be done by a church than by other boys or the wrong kind of adult. In action—the proper mode of communication with a small child—the man with a tie had given that boy a powerful message. *We are doing what men do, and it takes precedence over whatever you might want. Now be quiet and pay attention, and you can be part of it, too.* A proper man's message for boys.

Brian Kirkpatrick writes from Baltimore, Maryland.

Letter From British Columbia

by Jeremy Lott

Tolerance, Finally

◆

The implosion of the right-wing official opposition Alliance Party under its young evangelical leader Stockwell Day dominates the headlines of most of Canada's papers and feisty tabloids: Will the "gang of eight" dissident Alliance MPs be hung out to dry? Will Stock get drummed out over some Zionist-sounding remarks that set the tender Canadian sensibilities so on edge? Will that toad Joe Clark, leader of the squishy center-right Progressive Conservatives, capitalize on the Alliance's disarray and bring his party back from the near-death experience of the last two elections? Will this keep the right split for the next decade, ensuring Liberal dominance? Inquiring minds want to know.

In the rest of Canada, that is. British Columbia is preoccupied with its own drama. After a decade on the outs, the B.C. Liberals are back in power—and then some. Unlike the last election, when the Reform party split the B.C. conservative vote and returned the New Democratic Party (NDP) to office for a second tragic term, Gordon Campbell's party won a decisive 77 of the 79 ridings on May 16 with 56 percent of the total vote.

As impressive as that victory sounds (imagine a U.S. Congress with 425 Republicans in the House and 96 in the Senate), it's actually a lowball figure. Acting NDP Premier Ujjal Dosanjh's concession of defeat a week early deflated some of the anger voters had for the NDP and suppressed turnout: The Liberal's commanding early lead in the polls was cut from 70 to 56 percent. Of course, the Vancouver media's constant hand-wringing over what a clean sweep would mean for the state of democracy in British Columbia didn't help matters. Down to only two seats (neither including Dosanjh, who was defeated in his riding), the NDP is no longer allowed any government funds or recognized as the official opposition. The common sentiment in the province is "good riddance." As one reader wrote in a local paper the day after the election, "So we didn't elect 79 Gordon Campbells after all. Darn."

Through a strange electoral quirk, B.C. Liberals are, in the designation of *Vancouver Sun* columnist Vaughn Palmer, "grits in name only." They may belong to the same party as Prime Minister Jean Chretien (technically), but they wouldn't be caught dead acting like him. In fact, on fiscal and privacy issues, Campbell's Liberals ran to the right of America's GOP. Though the B.C. Liberal leader occasionally threw the random bone to his party's history of public works

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and refused to propose the kind of free-market reforms that the overburdened B.C. health-care system could benefit from, the platform that the Liberals ran on was essentially Thatcherite.

The party promised to slash income-tax rates, require a balanced budget, and take a baseball bat to the kneecaps of greedy, bloated, public- and private-sector unions. Government subsidies to business would be discontinued, and many of the more onerous regulations of the NDP era would be scrapped. Even social conservatives can take solace in the fact that the B.C. Liberals want to knock off social engineering and will hold free votes on all matters of conscience. With a 77 to 2 majority, they should be able to make good on all of these promises.

By a weird coincidence that makes you wonder if there isn't something to the notion of Providence, the next morning the Supreme Court of Canada finally decided that it believed in religious freedom and, therefore, that my degree will be worth the paper it is printed on. In a surprising eight to one ruling, with radical Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dubé angrily dissenting, the court upheld the B.C. Supreme Court and the Court of Appeals' rulings against the B.C. College of Teachers' bid to deny accreditation to Trinity Western University's education program.

The sticking point was over the part of the university's community-standards agreement that prohibits, among other things, fornication or homosexual sex, which the BCCT claimed violated the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The title of a glowing story in the *Globe and Mail* (widely cited by Trinity administrators) asked, "Students at Trinity Western University have pledged not to smoke, drink, swear, take drugs, fornicate or have gay sex. Are they unfit to teach your children?" The College of Teachers believed that, without a fifth year at a secular university, Trinity grads would be indistinguishable from genuine bigots.

A win for the BCCT would have had a ripple effect: First, the education program would have fallen; then the nursing program; then, Katy bar the door, and good luck getting a job. Students of "the most expensive school in Canada" (about $11,000 U.S. per year) were not enthusiastic about the prospect of being turned into undergraduates of the Bob Jones University of the North.

Nor would the comparison between TWU and BJU be particularly apt, were it not for the fact that a government agency was seeking to have a religious institution de-recognized. Trinity is on the far-left fringe of conservative evangelical schools. The majority of the religious-studies faculty favor female ordination. Non-religious-studies professors do not have to fear reprisal when they spout off on subjects ranging from the femininity of God to the imperialism of missions work. A March 2001 survey for *Mars' Hill*, the student newspaper, asked unmarried students questions concerning masturbation, pornography, petting, oral sex, "vaginal/anal" sex, and birth control. Forty-eight percent of men had engaged in oral sex, 85 percent of women believed in birth control, and only 18 percent of men felt guilty for their current nonmarital sexual activity.

The paper also published an article by "Thomas," an anonymous student claiming to be gay. Student responses were either supportive of Thomas's choice or of the abstract "hate the sin, love the sinner" variety. The dean of undergraduate studies' response included:

> *Mars' Hill* and "Thomas" are to be commended for stimulating a thoughtful discussion on a significant issue for both the Christian community and for society-at-large. We believe that all people are God's images. We must therefore honor them as such. Failure to do so violates our community standards as surely as any other sin. We agree with "Thomas" that a gay Christian is not an oxymoron.

To anyone with actual firsthand knowledge of Trinity Western, it was little wonder that the BCCT couldn't find a single intolerant Trinity-educated teacher to serve as Exhibit A, but that did not make the case any less serious. If TWU could be called "bigoted" for simply making students sign a statement of belief that ran contrary to p.c. norms, then any religious freedom in Canada would have been dead. Writing about the case in the *B.C. Report*, publisher Link Byfield distilled the potentially chilling implications: "The Supreme Court will now decide if we may believe things government officials don't like."

Even the Canadian arm of the ACLU found that prospect to be a bit much and filed a brief on behalf of Trinity. The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Seventh-Day Adventists also intervened on Trinity's behalf. (Talk about the pride lying down with the flock!) Money flooded into Trinity's coffers to defray court costs, and opposition leader Stockwell Day let it be known that he was doing some intervening of his own for Trinity, on his knees.

Prayer or sanity won out. The normally gay-rights-happy Supreme Court found that the BCCT's "expertise does not qualify it to interpret the scope of human rights nor to reconcile competing rights." The justices decided that "freedom of religion, conscience, and association" outweigh the "right to be free of discrimination based on sexual orientation" and said that, where discrimination does exist, it should be dealt with by disciplining individual teachers, not flogging the institution from whence they came. They ordered the BCCT to pick up some of TWU's court costs (over $600,000 Canadian).

In a press release, TWU Executive Vice President Guy Saffold declared victory not just for TWU but for "fundamental Canadian values":

> The Supreme Court of Canada has affirmed that, in our multi-cultural and multi-faith society, people cannot be arbitrarily penalized or barred from participation in public life simply because they hold religious views.

Bully for pluralism, but—as commentators in the *National Post* and the *Globe and Mail* pointed out—the decision was a narrow one that drew a line "generally between belief and conduct" and reaffirmed the near parity between religious freedom and "the right not to be discriminated against." Some gay-rights advocates latched onto a few throwaway lines and called the ruling a minor setback or, more laughably, a qualified success. But it, like the Liberal landslide, was a necessary win.

Without a tyrannical, inept NDP government to cover their flanks, it's unlikely that members of the BCCT would have dragged British Columbia and the rest of Canada through three court cases to try to rig the system against even nominally pious Christians. Angry British Columbian voters and a sane Supreme Court may have ensured that it will never happen again.

Jeremy Lott is the senior editor of Spintech Magazine *and a student at Trinity Western University.*

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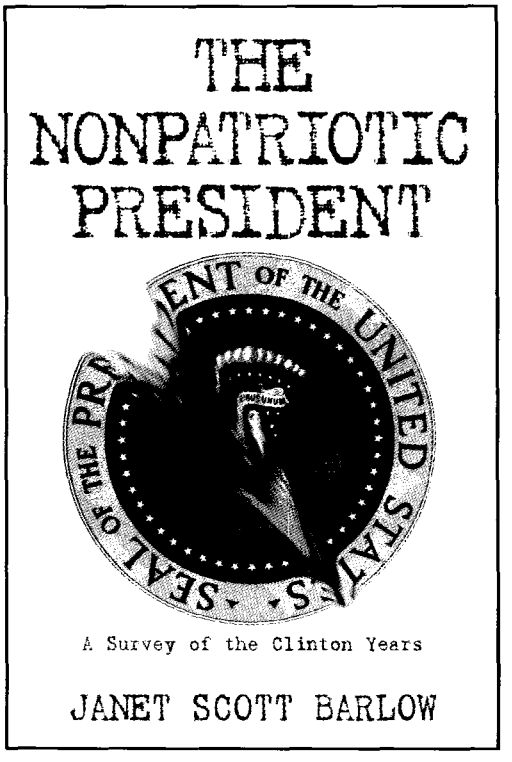

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by Srdja Trifkovic

Memorandum to President George W. Bush

In the aftermath of September 11, you have done a reasonably good job managing the crisis, symbolizing the nation's unity, restraining the laptop bombardiers, and preparing a military response that was neither hasty nor disproportionate. Now that two months have passed, you have more time to reflect on the long-term significance of that event and to draw relevant conclusions for the global strategy our country should follow over not only the coming weeks and months, but years and decades. Having earned your spurs as a trustworthy leader during the most traumatic moment for America in at least six decades, you are uniquely positioned to make radical changes in our foreign policy that are necessary if we are to avoid similar tragedies in the years to come.

While political considerations may temporarily oblige you to say that "Islam is a religion of peace," you must understand that Islam as such—not some allegedly aberrant form of it—is the main identifiable threat to America's global security in the coming century, and, in the longer term, to the survival of our civilization. Islam has been synonymous with violence and intolerance since its earliest days. Like communism or Nazism, Islam is part religion and part ideology, and it seeks to impose mind-numbing uniformity of thought and feeling upon its adherents, to subjugate and ultimately destroy all nonbelievers. It accepts no "peaceful coexistence" and never will.

It is, therefore, necessary to deny Islam (the adjective "militant" is redundant) a foothold inside America. Like its red ideological sibling of yore, Islam relies on a domestic fifth column to get its work done. Not one in a hundred communists was a Soviet spy, just as not one in a hundred Muslims is a bin Laden asset—but reducing the risk back then demanded denying visas (let alone green cards or passports) to all self-avowed communists. Doing likewise now with Osama's coreligionists is the prerequisite of any meaningful antiterrorist strategy, in conjunction with frank and fair ethno-cultural profiling. Since the first World Trade Center attack in 1993, the FBI has known that belligerent Islam had already established a firm foothold within the Muslim diaspora in America, but the demographic deluge has continued unabated. The irrational and manifestly false claim that each newcomer to America is equally assimilable has cost lives. By acknowledging that certain ethnic, religious, and cultural traits make some groups more assimilable than others, you will do a favor for all of us (and for your party into the bargain). Halting Islamic immigration will deny cover to terrorists who wish to remain anonymous and untraceable.

While denying potential and actual Islamic fifth columnists access to America, there is no reason to continue alienating over one billion Muslims in Asia and Africa. We should make it clear that we have no immediate quarrel with them, as long as they do not threaten us—and that we are most certainly not "in the same boat" with any third party against which they may have a grudge. U.S. foreign policy must avoid creating conditions for specifically anti-American Islamic hostility. (The general anti-Western, anti-Christian, and anti-European bias will always be there.) If we wish to reduce hatred of the United States in the Islamic world, we must avoid the perception of a permanent bias in Middle Eastern affairs that breeds the specifically anti-American variety of Islam. The United States needs a stable peace in the Middle East based on a scrupulously evenhanded treatment of the conflicting parties' claims, including Israeli security and Palestinian statehood. There are problems that simply may not have solutions (such as the issue of the just, permanent, and legally valid title to the Holy Land), but even if they did, it would not be America's business to look for them.

You have said that the terrorists envy us our freedom, our democracy, our way of life, our affluence. Had their actions arisen simply from envy, spite, and greed, they would have also hit Helsinki, Copenhagen, Ottawa, Geneva, or some other place as free and as affluent as America. Our country was a target, and others were not, because of what it does around the world (most notably in the Middle East), whether we believe that to be good or bad. To deal with the threat, we need to discard the pernicious notion of our "exceptionalism," of the view that—in Madeleine Albright's memorable phrase—"the United States stands taller than other nations, and therefore sees further," that America is not only wise but objective, and that her foreign policy is influenced by values and not prejudices. This hollow rhetoric infuriates literally billions of people. It also grates on the ears of many real Americans who do not share the generic jingoism of people like Madeleine Albright, who might just as well have settled elsewhere, except that the United States offered more money, more prestige, and more power. Tell a Serb that the Clinton administration was "standing tall" in Bosnia and Kosovo. Tell an Arab that the United States "sees further" in the Middle East. Not only does exceptionalism create flawed policies, it makes us incapable of understanding the ire of others.

Scrap all plans for NATO expansion, and strive to create a genuine "Northern Alliance" (which would include North America, Western Europe, and—some day—Russia) against our common enemies. Those who advise you to carry on as before—relying on "our proven friends and allies" in Islamabad, Riyadh, and Cairo, taking NATO to the suburbs of St. Petersburg-are deluded and dangerous. They wish Russia was bad, and they resent the Russians' clever ploy of siding with us against Osama bin Laden. If you push NATO eastward, unnecessarily and dangerously, Russia will remain an adversary at a time when her economic and demographic weakness may result in a violent Asiatic scramble for her natural resources and increasingly depopulated territories along her southern rim and east of the Urals. By extending NATO's *cordon sanitaire* around Russia, the United States would indirectly encourage the belief that the bear may soon be up for grabs.

Quietly scrap the missile-defense initiative. Death has come to ordinary Americans by a more prosaic route, and the real and present threat that remains with us all does not include a rogue missile. The next attack may well be biological or chemical rather than nuclear; even if it is nuclear, the method of delivery will more likely be a smuggled suitcase than a ballistic missile. Even a megaton device

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could be activated on a freighter sailing under the Verazzano or the Golden Gate Bridge. Missile defense will cost trillions of dollars that could be more usefully deployed in making America's frontiers, coasts and ports of entry impenetrable to all illegal entrants, regardless of race, creed, or national origin.

Reform the "intelligence community." It has failed miserably, because it is simply not designed to counter terrorist threats, but the long-dead communist threat. There is no substitute for human assessments and undercover reporting based on a thorough understanding of the social, cultural, and historical milieu. Inconspicuous agents on the ground—not more electronic gadgetry—can identify, target, and destroy the people and organizations who can, and will, strike again. The large and loyal Arab Christian community in the United States has the resources and the will to help get the job done.

Isolate the hysterical and irresponsible neoconservative cabal that still hopes to control you. They have forfeited any right to your ear by attempting to exploit the tragedy of September 11 to enhance our "passionate attachment" in the Middle East, which helped create the problem in the first place. They also wanted this country to initiate an all-out war with all of the enemies—whether real, potential, or imagined—of our supposedly "only reliable ally in the region." What they demand of you, Mr. President, is exactly what deductive reasoning indicates to be bin Laden's real objective: a cataclysmic war of civilizations that can only benefit those who desire the destruction of the remnants of our culture.

At the fundamental level, Mr. President, the events of September 11 show that the danger to ordinary Americans will remain with us as long as the United States remains committed to the unrestrained projection of her power everywhere in the world. The paramount lesson of this horror is that the threat to America exists because of our policy of global hegemony. From now on, the designating of "threats to national security" must follow the clear determination of America's national interests. If those interests are assumed to include the ability to project power everywhere and all the time, then the threat is unlimited and permanent. Can we permanently guarantee Israel's security (regardless of what she does to her neighbors), bring Arafat back to the table, bribe Egypt, keep Iraq embargoed and starved and occasionally bombed, police the border between the two Koreas, guarantee the "security" of Taiwan against the most populous country in the world, woo Iran, prop up Turkey, bully Libya, bomb Afghanistan, secure Pakistan against the backlash, keep Bosnia safe for the local Muslims to play hosts to terrorists, occupy Kosovo for the benefit of Albanian dope-smuggling pimps, build a space shield to ward off rogue missiles, surround Russia with an ever-expanding NATO, keep India and Pakistan from a nuclear shootout, destroy Colombian drug lords, protect the porous Rio Grande border, control internet messages and guns and phone calls at home, and stop the nosedive of the economy? The question answers itself. We cannot pay the price of the new empire, even if it were worth paying.

The shock of September 11 may help us rediscover a world in which America will be secure and free and will not threaten the security and freedom of others. These goals are inseparable from the preservation of our identity and our liberty at home. I urge you to found your foreign-policy strategies upon the notion that America is a real nation, a state with definable national interests that determine its diplomacy. Uphold and defend the security and freedom of the United States, and resist both the neo-Wilsonian one-world globalism and the neoconservative hegemonist interventionism that have contributed to this recent tragedy. Uphold "enlightened nationalism" based upon the Golden Rule, in line with our Constitution and in accordance with the wishes of most Americans, and ordinary people of good will will follow you into a new Golden Age of republican virtue and self-sufficiency.

c

The Deserted Mall

by Lawrence Dugan

I saw a closed mall, a ghost town,
And wondered, who shut it down?
Who turned that sparkling, lively place
To something less than parking space?
A fleet of cars inside white lines
In front of a forest of signs . . .
Till husband came with average wife
And turned the radio-dial for life.
Doctors claim the Romans were fed
Water from wall-pipes lined with lead
So soon the Caesars were tainted
Just as our houses were painted.
What will white-coated wise men say
Pumping our stomachs out someday?
"Yes, the junk they ate was impure,
"The brains went first, of that we're sure;
"They moved in cars made of metal
"But twice in a moon would settle
"On islands of plastic and glass
"For sustenance, leisure, and gas—
"Our peculiar question remains,
"Those shrinking hearts and feeble brains."

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CHRISTIANITY

Happy Holidays? Bah! Humbug!

by Tom Piatak

In 1938, Whittaker Chambers broke with the Communist Party. In *Witness*, Chambers describes his Christmas that year as one of great joy, in which he first told his children the Christmas story, shared with them the Christmas ornaments that had decorated his childhood Christmas trees, and enjoyed the Christmas carols his daughter was then learning.

At first glance, it is surprising that Christmas 1938 should have meant anything to the Chambers family. After all, Chambers was not yet a Christian, and his wife had never been a Christian. Yet such was the splendor of Christmas as once celebrated in America that Chambers had felt its pull even when he was still a communist. Chambers remembered that "Christmas had always been our one great holiday when I was a boy," and, as a Party member, he introduced his family to as much of the Christmas celebration as the Party permitted.

A contemporary of Chambers, Fr. Gereon Goldmann, experienced a very different Christmas half a world away. As a conscript in the SS, Goldmann was forced to celebrate not Christmas, but a bizarre winter holiday concocted by the Nazis:

> On Christmas Eve, there was a celebration, not a Christian one, but a pagan German *Julfest*. We were all together and had to sing some trash about the night of the clear stars and other sad substitutes for the true Christmas message.

As shocking as it may sound, the contemporary public observance of Christmas in America bears a much closer resemblance to the Nazis' *Julfest* than to the Christmas that enticed Chambers. And this extraordinary transformation has occurred in a generation.

I was born in 1964. Of course, my memories of my family Christmases are warm ones. But I also fondly remember the public celebrations of Christmas. In my public elementary school, we made Christmas ornaments and Christmas cards, sang Christmas carols, and ate Christmas cookies. In junior high, our Christmas concert introduced me to more wonderful Christmas music, including a portion of Bach's *Christmas Oratorio* and Pietro Yon's "Gesu Bambino." "Merry Christmas" was a universal greeting, Christmas carolers were regular visitors in our neighborhood, and the profusion of decorations adorning all manner of stores left no doubt as to what holiday everyone was celebrating. Local radio stations would air Christmas music throughout December, and the most popular station in town would air nothing but Christmas music from 6:00 P.M. on Christmas Eve until the end of Christmas Day. Television was filled with Christmas specials, and even the most secular shows almost invariably featured workmanlike and even reverent performances of some hallowed carols.

No one I knew was bothered by the effusive celebration of a national holiday observed by the overwhelming majority of Americans. The only concerns of which I was aware were admonitions against the commercialization of Christmas and to "keep Christ in Christmas."

Such concerns now seem quaint. As Don Feder observed last December, "Today, the challenge is to keep Christmas in Christmas." We now have "holiday cards," "holiday parties," "holiday songs," and even "holiday trees." In order to avoid giving offense to anyone anywhere, millions of Americas are now seemingly content to keep quiet about the holiday they do celebrate and to act as if all sorts of other minor festivals—Kwanza, Hanukkah, Bodhi Day, Diwali, Ramadan, the winter solstice—are equally important. It has reached the point where wishing someone a "Merry Christmas" is a political act, not a friendly commonplace. Think about it: When was the last time a store employee, seeing you buying presents on Christmas Eve, wished you a "Merry Christmas" rather than "Happy Holidays"? When was the last time *you* wished a stranger "Merry Christmas" rather than "Happy Holidays"?

My first introduction to the anti-Christmas mania that has engulfed America occurred in college. In 1984, a suitemate and I attempted to introduce Christmas cheer to our dormitory by putting up a Christmas tree and a nativity scene. Unfortunately, our suite also housed prospective students visiting the campus, and we were told the crèche had to go, lest a prospective non-Christian student take offense. Apparently, high-school seniors were so delicate that they could not withstand the knowledge that other people might not believe everything they did.

Law school was no better. In 1988, the new dean of the Michigan Law School, Lee Bollinger, issued an edict to the law-school student singing group, the Headnotes, declaring that they could not sing any Christmas music at the school's end-of-semester gathering. This prohibition covered not just religious carols, but any song that even mentioned the word "Christmas." (Ironically, Bollinger's academic specialty is the First Amendment.) Instead, the law school offered up an absurd, leftist commentary on "Antigone" set to awful contemporary music. (As a friend remarked, it was beginning to look a lot like Thebes.)

Of course, the desire to suppress Christmas is scarcely confined to higher education. My sisters' children until very recently attended a public elementary school in an affluent Detroit suburb. In that suburban system, which has a student body that is overwhelmingly white and (at least nominally) Christian, teachers are forbidden to mention Christmas. Instead, they teach about Hanukkah and Kwanza. So thorough was the indoctrination that my nephew asked two years ago why we did not celebrate Hanukkah or Kwanza. He knew about Christmas, of course, but was understandably concerned that he was missing out on something, since the only holidays he heard about outside the home were absent from our family celebrations.

Some elementary-school teachers have chosen a less direct assault on Christmas, diminishing its importance by presenting it as merely one of an ever-growing list of seemingly equal and interchangeable holidays rather than obliterating all mention of it. Last year, a friend's son partici-

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pated in his elementary school's "holiday concert." In his school system, the great majority of students are white and Christian, yet only two Christmas carols were sung, and one of them was "*Feliz Navidad*." This small concession to Christmas was more than outweighed by the two Kwanza songs, the two Hanukkah songs, the Ramadan song, and the Chinese New Year song the children also performed. (I suspect that all the non-Christmas songs are recent concoctions, written for such dreary occasions as contemporary public school "winter concerts.")

Another illustration of the multicultural madness came from a friend whose daughter attends public school in another suburb that is overwhelmingly white and Christian. She brought home an exercise designed to help the children learn to tell time. The exercise featured the following "holiday schedule" for a "winter holiday party":

> Make Kwanzaa *mkekas*: 12:00 noon
> Make Christmas cookies: 12:30 p.m.
> Listen to a story about Ramadan: 1:00 p.m.
> Play the dreidel game: 1:30 p.m.
> Break a piñata: 2:00 p.m.
> Make Diwali powder designs: 2:30 p.m.
> Go on a Chinese New Year parade: 3:00 p.m.

The sheer inanity of these examples (and of the countless others that could have been included) is striking. But the most important thing about the transformation of Christmas to "holiday" is how needless it was, and how it was the product not of "tolerance," but of hatred, resentment, and envy.

The transformation was needless because the formerly exuberant American Christmas inflicted real harm on no one, while giving joy to many. Christmas in America was never marked by pogroms or expressions of hatred but by countless acts of charity and kindness. Much of the public celebration of Christmas was capable of being enjoyed by non-Christians as well as Christians, and almost everyone did enjoy at least some of it. I know non-Christians who enjoy Christmas specials, Christmas movies, Christmas music; I do not think these people are unique.

The multiculturalists justify their assault on Christmas by claiming that the public celebration of Christmas causes non-Christians to feel "left out." I am skeptical of this claim; I suspect most people are not overwhelmed by the knowledge that others do not always believe as they do. But even if the multiculturalists are right, how much should we worry about those who feel left out by the public celebration of Christmas? We cannot forever shield non-Christians from the reality that they are a minority in America, and suppressing the observances of the majority seems a high price to pay to allow overly sensitive souls to live in a comfortable delusion. Of course, children should not be required to participate in school activities of which their parents disapprove, and local control of schools means that districts with large populations of non-Christians will probably have different December activities than districts that reflect the American norm. But a child who does not participate in a Christmas concert is no more excluded than a child whose parents do not allow him to go on a field trip or take a role in a school play. We do not respond to one form of exclusion by banning field trips or plays; we should not respond to the other by banning Christmas.

The multiculturalists, though, respond to the phony problem of exclusion by trying to ban Christmas because banning Christmas is what they are all about. They are animated by a hatred of Christianity, or of the West, or by sheer envy and resentment of the glories of a holiday they despise. If Christian children benefit from learning about Hanukkah and Kwanza and all the rest, shouldn't non-Christian children benefit even more from learning about the holiday most of their countrymen observe? But, of course, the trend has been to load curricula with references to formerly obscure festivals, while assiduously minimizing and even eliminating references to Christmas.

The malice of the multiculturalists is revealed in the way they present the alternative holidays they so evidently prefer. Kwanza, Hanukkah, and all the rest are presented as faux-Christmases, even anti-Christmases, in order to compete with, diminish, and ultimately efface Christmas. If Hanukkah customarily fell in October, would anyone other than observant Jews even notice it?

Indeed, the versions of Kwanza and Hanukkah now being taught to millions of schoolchildren are fabrications. Kwanza, of course, is completely phony, the 1966 invention of black nationalist Maulana Karenga. But Hanukkah's contemporary incarnation is a fabrication, too—the "Jewish Kwanzaa," as Frederic Schwarz observed in last December's *American Heritage* magazine. Traditionally, Hanukkah was a very minor festival, primarily for children, overshadowed theologically not only by the High Holy Days and Passover but also by Simchat Torah, Shavuot, and Sukkot, and surpassed by Purim as an occasion for celebration. Teaching children about Kwanza, rather than about the Christmas carols and spirituals developed by blacks, inculcates negative lessons about whites instead of positive ones about blacks. Teaching children about Hanukkah, rather than the beliefs that actually sustained Jews on their sometimes tragic and tumultuous historical journey, inculcates negative lessons about Christianity, not positive ones about Judaism.

Nor, despite the multiculturalists' claims, are the anti-Christmases even remotely equal to the real thing. In theological terms, Christmas is the second most important feast in the Christian calendar. In practical terms, it has been the principal holiday of the world's most creative civilization for over a millennium. It has inspired a profusion of art, architecture, literature, and music; a love of Christmas can lead to a deeper love of our whole civilization. Giotto never painted a Kwanza scene, Bach did not write a *Hanukkah Oratorio*, and Dickens did not pen *A Ramadan Carol*. And no one comparable to them did, either. Ultimately, we should be free to celebrate Christmas publicly and joyously, because it is a great holiday, and because it is *our* holiday—one of the crowning glories of the Western culture that gave birth to America and sustains us still.

Despite the undeniably depressing nature of the continuing and expanding assault against Christmas, I have not lost all hope. Most Americans still cherish Christmas, just as Chambers remembered Christmas with fondness even during his time as a Communist. The truth set Chambers free from communism, and the truth can set us free from multiculturalism. If we summon the courage to stand up for our beliefs, the words of the carol beloved by Dickens will once more ring true:

> Now to the Lord sing praises,
> All you within this place,

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And with true love and brotherhood,
Each other now embrace.
This holy tide of Christmas,
All others doth deface.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy.
O tidings of comfort and joy.

Tom Piatak writes from Cleveland, Ohio.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Who Needs Islamic Fundamentalism?

by Andrei Navrozov

After almost a century of dealing with international terrorism—since communism, in practice as well as in theory, is hardly anything more complex than terrorism on a global scale—Western democracies should have caught on to the fact that all social movements, particularly those perceived as spontaneous, are invariably organized, manipulated, and directed by those whose interests they ultimately serve. Do ordinary middle-class Americans really get out of bed one day with the idea of sending money to arm the IRA? Do English roses call on their local ironmongers before chaining themselves to railings at nuclear installations? Do timid Chinese students use their life savings to hire buses and megaphones for a protest in Tiananmen Square?

Thus the West ought to have awakened to the uneasy realization that blaming Islamic fundamentalism for the attack on Manhattan and Washington, D.C., is like accusing a gun of murder. The fierce and determined faces of the killers, defying posterity in the news pages, are the faces of history's fall guys, clueless patsies whose eternal destiny it is to leave greasy fingerprints on the surface of world events. And the questions that the West's political and media establishments ought to have asked are: Who is the ultimate client and beneficiary? Who pulls the strings of these marionettes? Where does the thread of knowledge and responsibility lead?

That such a thread exists cannot be doubted. We know that only four of the terrorists had been trained as pilots, which means that the others, who believed they were all in it together, may never have been told that theirs was a suicide mission. What information had been withheld from the four by the cell leader who had brainwashed, financed, and trained them? What information had been withheld from the cell, hidden from the branch, concealed from the national organization, and not supplied to the international movement? It is equally clear that the thread must have a beginning.

Yet the West's political and media establishments have time and again proved themselves unable and unwilling to ask such uncomfortably far-reaching questions. Central as the causes of this epochal failure are to my argument, in the scope of this article I can do little more than enumerate them.

The last serious effort in the West's century-long struggle to apprehend and reverse the global advance of totalitarianism coincided with the Reagan presidency. At that time, it was still possible for a detached observer such as myself to find a common language with the times, if only because the context of the debate left blank some tolerably wide margins. Even in Washington, but certainly in London in those years, to be marginalized for criticizing the political, military, or intelligence establishment—for their myopia, their wishful thinking, and their overall inability to understand or to cope with the Soviet threat—did not mean to be summarily silenced. It meant being a dissident, with all the advantages of being part of a legitimate political and intellectual minority.

Then everything changed. President Bush's term in office coincided with the sudden restructuring of totalitarianism in Russia, a geopolitical hurricane that blew away all the trusty signposts upon which a wary West had relied for decades in the absence of any real knowledge or deep understanding of the enemy. Now the dissidents would no longer be heard in the ensuing chorus of jubilant confusion: America's new foreign policy of self-congratulation did not leave us any margin at all. When, in November 1991, Lord Chalfont addressed the House of Commons with a plea to reconsider "Options for Change" (Britain's bumbling way of inaugurating the New World Order and pocketing the "peace dividend"), he was reduced to quoting an article I had written in support of his claim that Russia "still has enormous military power." When I saw that the defense of the realm hinged on the turn of a lone dissident's pen, I realized that the game was up.

Eventually, I withdrew and moved to Italy, but not before publishing a short book entitled *The Coming Order: Reflections on Sovietology and the Media.* In it, as in all the newspaper and magazine articles that I managed to publish during the last decade, I defended my view that the worldwide "collapse" of "communism" is a strategic maneuver; that "restructuring" in the "Soviet Union" is the transfer of power from the old Communist Party clique to the new secret-police junta; and that Western Sovietologists, political scientists, and media commentators are more helpless and naive than they have ever been in the face of this new, and in all likelihood final, totalitarian challenge.

Meanwhile, the issue of European unification had taken center stage in Westminster. With both "communism" and the "Soviet Union" safely buried, even the most hardened dissidents in Britain's Eurosceptic movement—called "bastards" by the prime minister for organizing parliamentary opposition to the Maastricht Treaty—could not so much as consider the view that the driving force behind the unification process was the Kremlin. The most outspoken among them pointed to Germany as the ultimate beneficiary, in terms of its eventual political and economic dominance, and found *that* troubling enough. None saw that the restructuring of Soviet totalitarianism, whose new foreign policy had been launched with the reunification of Germany and a call for a "common European home from the Atlantic to the Urals," would have been an absurd proposition in the absence of just such an opportunity for peaceful expansion westward. *Peaceful* because, at the end of the day, Moscow would remain the only military power in a Europe that was unified economically, tied to Russia and its long-standing satellites politically, and decoupled from the United States militarily.

Perhaps the Eurosceptics' shortsightedness was excusable, as not until May 2000, for instance, did it emerge that Helmut Kohl's ruling party had long been financed by the Communist Party of East Germany with funds filtered through communist Hungary, meaning that, at the time of Germany's unification, Kohl was literally in Gorbachev's pocket. This and related money-laundering scandals finally cost the chancellor his job, but by

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then it was too late for Britain's heroic "bastards" to fight against European unification in any but the limited way they had chosen.

It always pays, therefore, to look at the larger picture. I would argue that the geopolitical history of the last century—in the course of which totalitarianism emerged, developed, and evolved to become the ineluctable lot of mankind that it is today—may be encapsulated in three short sentences. First Stalin created Hitler. Then Stalin sicked Hitler on the West. And then Stalin got the West to become his ally in order to defeat Hitler.

The bitter fruit of Stalin's strategy was half of Europe falling into his lap—bitter because Stalin had meant for *all* of Europe to become his, as surely it would have done had the object of his political manipulation not smelled a rat and leveled the first blow. With fewer than one quarter of Russia's tanks, no winter clothing for the troops, and barely enough fuel to keep the army advancing for 90 days, this was the beginning of a mass suicide on a national scale.

What made Stalin cringe, even as his prematurely roused enemy drew near, was not some phantom fear at the improbable prospect of an eventual German victory; it was, rather, his realization that the surprise attack had thwarted his plan of absolute domination over Eurasia in his lifetime. As for the all-too-probable prospect of a partial victory for Russia, this was small consolation, for Stalin had long understood that partial victories were no good for totalitarianism.

To finish what Stalin started—incapacitating, embracing, and absorbing first Central and then Western Europe, so that the "common European home from the Atlantic to the Urals" is at last occupied by its historically inevitable owner—and to achieve this objective without war is the challenge of the Andropov generation to which all of Russia's present-day leaders belong. All of them come from the Lavrenty Beria school of political studies, including those somewhat less prominently titled, such as Arkady Volsky or Evgeny Primakov, and those squarely in the Western field of vision, such as Mikhail Gorbachev and Vladimir Putin.

To drive a politically and economically united Europe into Moscow's inescapable embrace, to unify Europe once and for all, the West as a whole had to be properly spooked—but not by Moscow, of course. On the contrary, Moscow was to pose as a fellow victim of the clear and present danger lurking without. As in the tried and tested (though in the end only partly successful) Hitler scenario, the danger in question had to be identified and incubated before it could be sprung on the sleeping West like a succubus.

Such danger as eventually offered itself up for the role of succubus was Islamic fundamentalism, in particular, and the Muslim world generally. Like Hitler's rise to power, the specter of 1.5 billion Mussulmans brandishing "pre-*perestroika*" Kalashnikovs from Kashmir to Morocco was a plausible enough threat to terrify the West; unlike Hitler, it was not so national, autarchic, or spontaneous as to ever turn on the puppeteer. Admittedly, it was the Russians who had invaded Afghanistan, not the other way round; but by the time the war in Chechnya was percolating, a few bombs in Moscow planted by "post-*perestroika*" secret police (see Lorenzo Cremonesi's interview with André Glucksmann in *Corriere della Sera*, August 11, 2000) would enable Putin to claim that Russia was on the receiving end of the terrorist nightmare.

Now the threat of what would become known euphemistically as "rogue regimes"

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—states working as the launching pads of terrorism against the West—had to be made real. Here, a few facts may be adduced. During the single year preceding Putin's election in the spring of 2000, Moscow's *known* sales of military hardware to Baghdad had already run into the hundreds of millions of dollars; yet, in the spring of 2001, to accelerate and direct these acquisitions, Iraq opened a "military intelligence bureau" in Moscow, its 20-strong staff headed by General Mohammed Subhi, and another one in Belarus, headed by Col. Kamil Hadidi (see the *Sunday Telegraph*, February 25). Defectors from Saddam Hussein's regime, meanwhile, brought to the West the old news that "Iraq carried out a successful nuclear test before the Gulf War and now has a nuclear stockpile." The test, carried out in September 1989 underneath Lake Rezzaza, used a Russian nuclear warhead and went undetected because "the Russians supplied Iraq with a table listing US satellite movements" (see the *Sunday Times*, February 25).

Concurrently with the escalating military buildup in Iraq organized from Moscow, Putin, in his meeting with NATO officials in February 2001, "offered Europe his space shield" (see *Corriere della Sera*, February 21), the same mythical shield he had been offering Europe since his first official meeting with Kohl's successor, Chancellor Schroeder, in June 2000. As at least one regional Italian paper summarized his message in a headline, "Putin to Europe: We Will Defend you from the Muslims."

If it is indeed true, as some senior retired officers of the CIA, including James Woolsey, a former director of the agency, have suggested, that Iraqi intelligence services were behind the attack on Manhattan, so much the better for my argument. "There's never been anything inconsistent about the idea that bin Laden would be providing most of the people in this, with Iraqi intelligence helping logistically and otherwise being behind it," Woolsey has been quoted as saying (in the *Daily Telegraph*, September 20). The important aspect of Woolsey's thinking here is that the Islamic "fundamentalist threat" is at least perceived as consanguine with, and fraternal to, the "rogue regimes" that Russia has been financing, arming, and inciting against the West with one hand, while offering the West protection from these very regimes with the other.

Secular Iraq is only one example. What if the World Trade Center attacks in fact came from Iran, Syria, or Lybia? From opposition groups in Saudi Arabia, Algeria, or Pakistan? From the Palestinian refugee camps? Or even from Afghanistan, with its history of political double-dealing and tribal backstabbing? No matter. Wherever they came from is a "rogue regime"; whichever "rogue regime" they came from, Moscow has been supporting it; and whatever the "rogue regime" may now say to clear its name will be drowned in the twin chorus of Western indignation and, more important, of Russian solicitude.

In the immediate aftermath of the attack on Manhattan, two events of geopolitical significance have taken place. One is that Russia *openly* signed a military pact with Iran, arguing that "its links with a country seen by Washington as one of the leading sponsors of terrorism would in reality advance the struggle against terrorism" (*International Herald Tribune*, October 3). The other is Putin's announcement in Brussels that, as "global politics had experienced a tectonic shift," Russia was ready to join NATO (*International Herald Tribune*, October 4). "The bombings of Russian apartment complexes," averred Putin, "bore the

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same signature" as the World Trade Center bombing. Indeed, they do.

I conclude with the words of a veteran political observer, John Keegan (defense editor of the *Daily Telegraph*, writing in that newspaper on September 14):

> There are two reasons why President Putin might help. The first is that Russia is also plagued by the menace of Islamic terrorism that, in Chechnya, has inflicted humiliation on the successor to the once-great Soviet army. The second is that lending assistance to NATO might persuade the alliance to admit Russia to membership.

There is, perhaps, not much difference between what I say here and what Keegan says in his article—except that I realize that the developments he anticipates spell the end of freedom in Europe, and he does not. Keegan believes that Russia's help is a hopeful sign, invaluable to the West in its plight, while I believe that it marks Russia's triumphant return to Stalin's dream of totalitarian hegemony of Eurasia.

But what would people have said to a writer who, a few days after Pearl Harbor, wrote an article warning the West against an alliance with Stalin?

Andrei Navrozov is Chronicles' *European correspondent.*

GUNS

Gianni, Get Your Gun

by David Kopel and Carlo Stagnaro

One of the most important reasons for the sweeping victory of Silvio Berlusconi and his House of Liberty in the recent Italian election was concern for public safety, which ranks as the number-one issue on the minds of voters, according to some polls. Berlusconi promised to do whatever was necessary to make people feel safer, and his platform affirmed that

> Safety of the people, preservation of their security and protection of their goods, is the basis of the contract between citizenry and institutions, without whom the government loses its historical and moral legitimacy.

Public safety is leading some Italians to rediscover the virtue of people's ability to protect themselves.

An online poll conducted by Publiweb (a major Italian web portal) asked, "Is it legitimate to defend one's property with guns?" Fifty-nine percent said "*si*," while 36 percent would allow the use of firearms only in an extreme emergency. A mere three percent categorically rejected the use of firearms for the defense of property.

Italian citizens do not enjoy a constitutional right to bear arms, and, unlike in the Commonwealth countries, there is no common-law tradition, either. Purchase of a firearm requires a police license and registration. As of 1996, there were 757,240 people licensed to possess shotguns for hunting purposes.

Handgun permits are much harder to obtain. Usually, permits are granted to those whom the government decides have a "need" to carry firearms for self-defense, such as jewelers or others who carry valuables for business purposes. These licenses have declined from 42,396 in 1996 to 31,850 in 1998.

Dr. Paolo Tagini, assistant editor of the gun monthly *Armi Magazine* (*web.tiscalinet.it/armimagazine*) explains the complexity of Italian laws:

> There are . . . fifty Italian gun-control laws, which have been passed over the last sixty years; such a "legal stratification" has made possible the introduction of ever stricter laws, that have often failed in protecting honest citizens. The Italian system doesn't work with regard to the illegal import of guns (especially from the Adriatic Sea); on the other hand, honest citizens often must suffer useless torments whose never-stated goal is to move them away from guns.

Italy has a thriving illegal import/export trade in firearms, especially with Albania and the rest of the Balkans.

Actual use of a firearm for protection often leads to criminal prosecution. In one case in southern Italy, a man was relaxing on his terrace when a gang started shooting in his direction. He returned fire and shot a 15-year-old gangster. The man was criminally prosecuted for injuring the gangster, under the theory that he should have taken shelter behind a parapet rather than firing back.

In Brescia, a man had been robbed three times. One night, he heard suspicious noises from the courtyard. He looked out the window and saw a gang trying to jimmy his door. He took out his gun and fired, killing one. He is being prosecuted for intentional homicide.

A hunter kept his gun in an armored cabinet, as the law requires. One day, his son stole it and used it to shoot another adolescent. The hunter was prosecuted for failing to store his weapon safely.

The media are worried about rising Italian sentiment in favor of self-defense. As noted columnist Corrado Augias wrote in the liberal daily *La Repubblica*:

> What would be the result if everyone carried guns? The Far West or, if you prefer a nearer and only apparently more graceful picture, Romeo and Juliet's Verona. It took centuries to limit the right to self-defense; I don't think we should go back.

In the hardcore communist daily *Il Manifesto*, Massimo Carlotto deplored those who believe in "the necessity of self-defense. . . . The time has come to understand and seriously monitor the phenomenon, with the goal to restrict the gun trade." His view is typical among gun-control supporters, for whom any system short of total prohibition is seen as full of loopholes.

Modern Italian gun-control laws date from the Fascist period; the Public Safety Act was passed in 1931 as one of a series of measures designed to put an end to leftist violence. Addressing the Italian Senate, Benito Mussolini explained:

> The measures adopted to restore public order are: First of all, the elimination of the so-called subversive elements. . . . They were elements of disorder and subversion. On the morrow of each conflict I gave the categorical order to confiscate the largest possible number of weapons of every sort and kind. This confiscation, which continues with the utmost energy, has given satisfactory results.

Yet after the fall of the Fascist regime, the gun-control law remained and was

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gradually made even more stringent. In response to communist terrorism in the 1970's, a variety of laws were passed to disarm law-abiding people. More recent amendments have forced those desiring a firearms permit to demonstrate a "necessity" and to give the government extremely personal information, such as medical certificates.

In the United States, at the annual Gun Rights Policy Conference (run by the Second Amendment Foundation), delegates habitually adopt a "NATO Doctrine" resolution, whereby an attack on one form of gun ownership is considered to be an attack on all. This resolution, and the consciousness behind it, mean that practitioners of obscure shooting disciplines (e.g., .50-caliber long-range target shooting) can count on energetic support from the full spectrum of gun owners.

Italian gun owners, however, rarely defend a comprehensive right to bear arms but focus narrowly on the interests of their particular shooting discipline. Hunting groups do not support gun ownership for target shooting or for self-defense. Target shooters ignore the rights of hunters. And almost no one discusses the most important element of the right to bear arms: the duty of a free people to resist tyranny. Supposedly, a civilized Western republic would never lapse into tyranny—although Italy did so under Mussolini and the Caesars.

But there are signs of a growing solidarity among some gun owners. The *Associazione Difesa del Cacciatore* (*www.adica.net*) is a pro-hunting group that also advocates the right to keep and bear arms for self-defense. The group's president, attorney Mauro Cecchetti, argues that:

> Italian hunters should immediately take what was stolen from them: their sacred and inviolable right to freedom of hunting, freedom to own and carry guns for hunting activity, for sports . . . for personal and home defense.

Leonardo Facco owns a publishing firm (*www.libertari.org*) in Treviglio. He has published such libertarian authors as Murray N. Rothbard, Hans-Hermann Hoppe, and Carlo Lottieri, who argue that an armed citizenry is insurance against tyranny. A new book by Lottieri, *Il pensiero libertario contemporaneo* (Macerata: Liberilibri) offers a history of libertarian thought that explains that, without the right to self-defense, there are no rights at all. Publisher Facco promises: "My intention is to promote pro-gun theories—and the widest knowledge of gun facts."

Even on the political side, something is developing. Prof. Antonio Martino of the Forza Italia movement (*www.forza-italia.it*) is a noted conservative who served as foreign minister in 1994, under the first Berlusconi administration. He has been appointed defense minister in the new Berlusconi government, and he endorses private gun ownership:

> Even though I am not armed, I strongly oppose the regulations in force, which disarm only honest citizens, not criminals. Such a near-prohibition on gun ownership is harmful and anti-liberty. It also is a good example of the damage caused by the idea of a "crime of danger"—a victimless crime—an idea which is a real aberration, but which is spreading and thus eating away our own liberties.

Professor Martino is also a strong critic of the militarization of law enforcement.

The Forza Italia has no official position on guns, and, as defense minister, Professor Martino plays no direct role in crafting gun policy. But his statements help gun owners exit the ghetto in which statist culture has confined them.

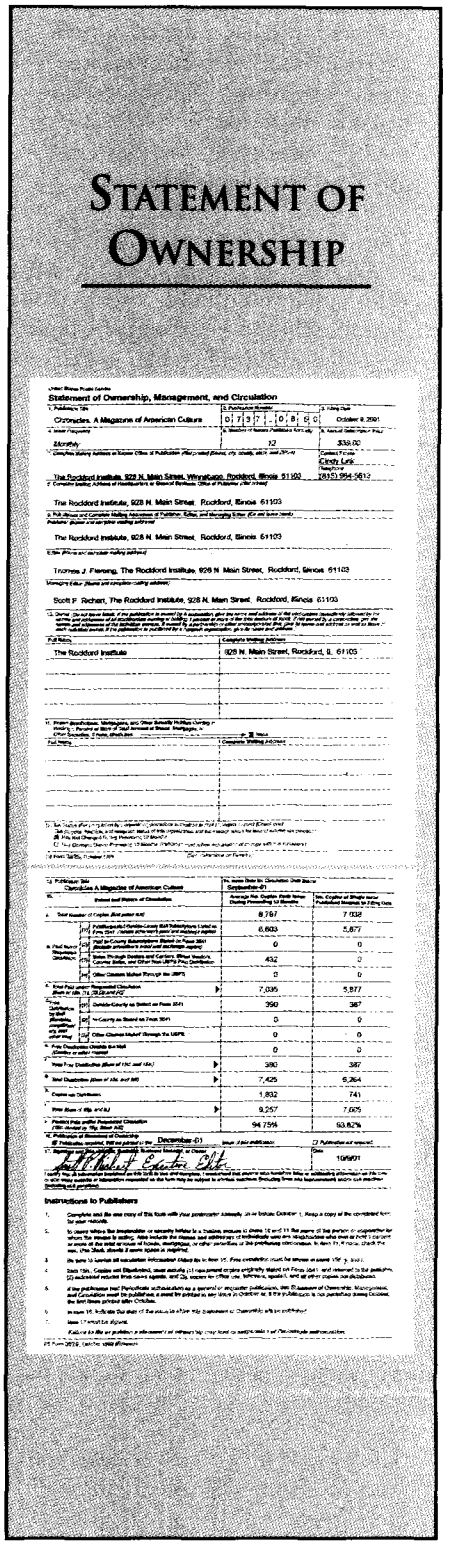
Likewise, while the Lega Nord (*www.leganord.org*) has no official position on guns, Cesare Galli, a member and a prominent intellectual-property lawyer, promoted a petition in his hometown of Brescia to ask for stronger public-safety measures, including the right of honest citizens to keep and bear arms:

> The right of the people to defend themselves should be granted; such a goal can be pursued only by giving them the opportunity to be armed. The government can't legitimately prevent people from owning firearms, leaving them therefore helpless in the face of criminals.

Another Lega Nord member, Giancarlo Pagliarini—a member of parliament and a former budget minister—often says that, "If one gets in other people's houses without their consent, one is looking for a bullet."

Will Italy reform its statist, pro-criminal gun laws? That the question has even become the subject of serious political debate is a measure of how much Berlusconi has changed the political dialogue.

Dave Kopel is the research director of the Independence Institute (www.i2i.org). *Carlo Stagnaro is a freelance journalist in Italy and coeditor of the libertarian review* Enclave.



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In The Dark

by George McCartney

Something Both Brighter and Darker

I went to see director Scott Hicks' *Hearts in Atlantis* not having read the Stephen King novel on which it is based. The little I knew of King's other fiction was not encouraging. I expected another excursion into bump-in-the-night territory—not my favorite place to visit. To my surprise, the film turned out to be a moving portrayal of a happenstance but deeply felt father-son relationship. This, in large part, is due to Anthony Hopkins' transcendent portrayal of the mysterious Ted Brautigan, a 66-year-old man who befriends Bobby Garfield (Anton Yelchin), a fatherless boy of 11.

Although Bobby is the protagonist, it is the knighted Welshman who raises the film far above screenwriter William Goldman's middling adaptation. (I speak with authority. The film made me curious enough to read King's novel afterward. While it isn't Tolstoy, it is an unexpectedly worthy meditation on our mortal condition.) Whether deliberately or not, the film acknowledges its debt to Hopkins by having Bobby quote him. This happens just after the lad gives his friend Carol (Mika Boorem) an impulsive peck on the lips. Having made the briefest essay at prepubescent romance, Bobby assesses the results with words Hopkins' character spoke to him earlier concerning one's first oscular moment: "It will be the kiss by which all others in our lives will be judged and found wanting." Puzzled by such eloquence, Carol merely wrinkles her nose, and Bobby sighs, "It sounded better when Ted said it." No one will disagree. When Hopkins delivered this observation, it seemed exquisitely luminous. With his middle-distance gaze and effortless *basso profundo*, he gave King's sentence all the force of an incontestable first principle in the science of love—momentarily, at least. Only afterward, free of Hopkins' spell, do we regain our wits and recognize this for the grade-B bologna it is. Remember that first bumbling attempt to put a lip-lock on a member of the opposite sex? If you're like me, you'll cringe at the notion of using the experience as the yardstick to assess all subsequent smooching. Doing so would be as reasonable as judging your driving competence by how well you handled a stick-shift in your first frazzled hour at the wheel. Only an actor of Hopkins' consummate wizardry could make us believe otherwise, and that is why he is perfect for this film.

Hearts in Atlantis

Produced by Castle Rock Entertainment
Directed by Scott Hicks
Screenplay by William Goldman from Stephen King's novel
Released by Warner Brothers

For once, the uncanny Hopkins is typecast. He plays an aging man with the preternatural ability to read minds and then bestow this gift on those he touches. This conceit perfectly mirrors what Hopkins has been doing for over 40 years, entering into his roles so thoroughly that we are convinced we know his characters personally. At one point, Ted tells Bobby, "I pass on a window into other peoples' minds." I couldn't help thinking, yes, you certainly do. There's Captain Bligh, Hannibal Lector, C.S. Lewis, and Titus Andronicus. He even made us believe he was Richard Nixon with an English accent. Every role he plays is a window into another soul. How he does it is as mysterious as Ted's psychic eavesdropping.

The story Hopkins is serving here has been shaped from "Low Men in Yellow Coats," the first of the five loosely connected narratives that make up King's novel, each meant to be a meditation on America's "loss of innocence" during the 1960's. (Why do people suppose we had more innocence to lose in that decade than any other? What about the 1860's or the 1930's? Or, for that matter, this very moment?) It's a tale of a boy forced by circumstances to face adult issues prematurely and finding help in the person of the mysteriously gifted Ted, a stranger who enters his life apparently by chance and seemingly from nowhere.

We meet Bobby in 1960 on his 11th birthday. For a present, his mother gives him an adult library card instead of the bicycle he had hoped for. He is painfully aware that her choice has been dictated by her stinginess. The card is free. Bobby's father had died when he was three, leaving his mother extravagantly aggrieved by life's unfairness. She has developed into a shrewish cheapskate. "Your father left me with nothing but a stack of unpaid bills and a lapsed insurance policy," she automatically snaps whenever she spies a request for money looming on the horizon.

Bobby finds this puzzling. His mother doesn't hesitate to buy fancy clothing for herself. And there are other things he doesn't understand. She frequently stays late at her secretarial job in a local real-estate office on the pretext of having work to do for her loutish boss. When she is home in the evening, she receives calls at odd hours that alternately delight and depress her. Although he feigns indifference, Bobby is keenly aware that all is not as it seems.

The adult library card signals Bobby's need to gain some access to grown-up mysteries. Within minutes of receiving it, he meets Ted, who will become his mentor, directing him to the books most likely to open his eyes to realities just beyond his ken. In effect, Ted becomes Bobby's adult library card incarnate, his living passport from innocence to experience. He will prepare Bobby to deal with a world in which good does not necessarily prevail but, nevertheless, commands the loyalty of those who aspire to nobility. The novel makes much more of Ted's literary mentoring than does the film, especially his discussion of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, which King uses to introduce his central theme: the unavoidable struggle between civilized decency and savage bullying that underlies so much of adult experience. Although scanting the literary chat, the film also puts this issue front and center. Bobby and Carol are tormented—viciously, at times—by a group of older boys against whom they are virtually defenseless. Parallel to this, Bobby's mother—increasingly desperate for economic security—dangerously compromises herself with her crude boss on a business trip she should not have agreed to take.

Ted understands these predicaments, and not just because he can read minds. He has his own bullies at his back—th' low men who are pursuing him, pres'

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ably for his psychic powers. (That's low in the Dickensian sense, he explains.) In the novel, these pursuers have a provenance in the standard science-fiction conceit of a parallel universe. They stand for bullying forces of all sorts, power abusers—official or freelance—who take for granted that they have the right to impose their will on others. Here, the film deviates tendentiously and irresponsibly from the novel. While King leaves these low men eerily and suggestively vague, Goldman has taken the astonishing liberty of injecting his own politics into the plot. As Ted worries about the low men in the film, we are given close-ups of newspaper articles. "FBI Announces New Measures to Apprehend Red Infiltrators," bellows one tabloid headline; another seeks to calm its readers: "Hoover Denies FBI Is Recruiting Psychics in Battle Against Communism." Without saying it directly, the film leads the audience to believe that Ted had once been held captive by the FBI and is now on the ideological lam. Goldman and Hicks probably think their unwarranted interpolation merely makes King's conceit more accessible to a film audience that demands realism. Such is reality for Hollywood filmmakers: FBI, evil; communists, misunderstood. Old habits die hard. It's probably nothing more serious than vaguely leftish artists mindlessly falling into line with what they assume to be political righteousness. Ironically, they have only managed to expose their naivete, especially in the aftermath of September 11. I only wish King would blow the whistle on them for appropriating his text in the cause of their stale and thoroughly discredited notions.

Despite these narrative and ideological flaws, however, this film has its merits. It exhibits powerful acting and eloquent visual design. Hope Davis excels as the mother, breaking from her usual turn as the sweet, demure girl-next-door. She plays a thoroughly unlikable mom—scheming, manipulative, whiny, and enormously self-centered—and she does it so well that some reviewers have expressed dismay. How could she allow herself to be so unpleasant? This is called acting, very fine acting at that. The film's direction is also admirable. Working with children is risky, but Hicks has elicited some very natural performances from his young actors, especially Mika Boorem, who never seems to be performing at all. As Bobby, Anton Yelchin has been saddled with some nearly impossible lines. Nevertheless, he does well, especially in his scenes with Hopkins. Hicks' cinematography is also impressive. He shoots many interior scenes from Bobby's point of view. We see what the boy sees: separate rooms stretched across the screen divided by dark walls, each revealing only a portion of its contents through a partially opened door. Adults move back and forth—visible one moment, occluded the next. Simple as they are, these compositions ingeniously express the boy's fleeting, fragmentary view of the troubling adult world that surrounds him.

There is a Wordsworthian ambivalence in King's imagination, which is probably why he has gravitated toward fantasy and horror. These are genres that typically allegorize childhood confusion by placing sheltered innocence in the context of unpredictable and monstrous treachery. In *Hearts in Atlantis*, King has muted and softened this strategy, but it underlies his plot at every turn. While Ted carefully gives Bobby measured access to a disturbing adult world, he sometimes suggests it would be preferable to stay innocent. At one point, watching the children absorbed in their play, he muses that, "when you're young, you have moments of such happiness you think you're living a magical place, in Atlantis; then we grow up and our hearts break in two." The novel's conclusion corrects this romantic nostalgia for glorified youth with an episode that's not in the film. We meet Bobby as an adult of 50 and find that he has acquired "that sense of the world as a thin veneer stretched over something else, something both brighter and darker." A little vaguely, perhaps, but King seems to be reaching for the exhilaration that comes with a tragic sense of life, a mature vision that comprehends the full arc of our mortality.

* * *

In last month's column, I mentioned Edmund McNally, my cousin Elizabeth's husband. At the time I wrote, he had gone missing in the aftermath of the World Trade Center attack. Although we held onto some slender hope in the days immediately following September 11, we had to accept his loss. His funeral was held three weeks ago. Then, last week, we learned his remains had been discovered and he was given a burial service.

While no one knows for sure the full circumstances of Ed's demise, we do know this: He was in the same building in 1993 when terrorists attempted to bring it down with a truck bomb. At that time, Ed joined his colleagues in escaping down a stairwell. Before he did, however, he stopped to gather a huge computer drive in his remarkably strong arms. Fearing it might contain irreplaceable information, he carried this machine down 97 floors to street level. Subsequently—and no doubt not coincidentally—his firm put him in charge of evacuation procedures in case of another such incident. I mention this because many people from Ed's floor did escape the building's collapse. One lady reports she last saw Ed helping others on their way to safety. What must have happened next is this: The second plane hit his building, the south tower, trapping him along with so many others in the resulting conflagration. We'll never know how many people became heroes that day, but I am convinced Ed was one of them.

Ed would have been 41 this month. He leaves his wife, his three daughters, and hundreds of friends and family members behind.

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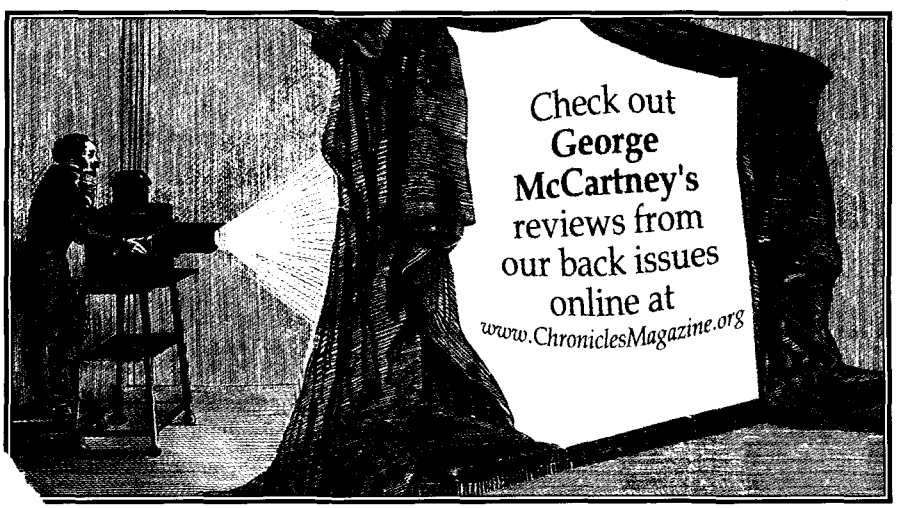

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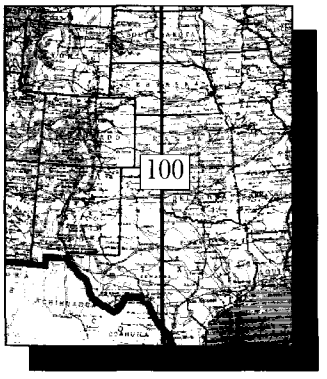
by Chilton Williamson, Jr.

Green Hills of Grayest Sand



Old Jules is more than the title of a book by Mari Sandoz it is the name of one of the monsters of American letters: the Simon Legree of the pioneer household who, married four times, drove one wife to the insane asylum and struck the fourth in the face with a handful of four-foot wire stays, after which she tried to poison herself with strychnine. ("I learn the g--d--- balky woman to obey me when I say, 'hold [the bull calf].'") A former medical student and scion of a proud upper-middle-class family in Zurich, this immigrant from Switzerland arrived in the Nebraska Panhandle in 1884 at the age of 25 to settle on a dugout claim, equipped with little more than a Vetterli single-shot rifle, the stamp collection he had begun as a boy, a team of horses and a wagon, and a spade. Jules Sandoz had scant use for the "American" pioneers coming into the country but affection for the Sioux Indians, who admired his marksmanship and took him along on extended hunting trips in the Sand Hills. He became a surveyor and a locator, settling fellow Swiss (including several of his brothers) on claims of their own; ran the local post office from his house; resisted the wealthy "English" cattlemen who fenced the land and tried to drive the farmers off their own claims (by lead colic, when intimidation didn't work); and planted orchards and vineyards in a series of horticultural experiments that earned him a reputation as the Luther Burbank of the Sand Hills. Also, he begat six children for Mary, his last wife, to rear. The eldest, Marie (she changed her name to Mari when she became an author), was born in 1896 without benefit of a doctor in the little house in the canyon of the Niobrara River she later called the River Place, where her father moved after abandoning the dugout on the west side of the Niobrara.

Mari Sandoz grew up conversing with her Sioux friends on Indian Hill, above the River Place. She died in 1966 in New York City, where she had moved in the 1940's to be near her publisher and indulge her taste for the theater. In between, she wrote 22 books: mostly nonfiction, but including several novels as well. Her aim, she wrote, was

> to understand as much as possible about man, shaped by and shaping his world. . . . I restricted myself to the trans-Missouri country—and its nearer settlement origins—examining modern man's occupancy in the region from the stone axe to the A-bomb and jet propulsion. Through the discovery of this one region, this one drop of water, I hope to discover something of the nature of the ocean.

So the books kept coming: *The Beaver Men, The Buffalo Hunters, The Cattlemen; Crazy Horse, Cheyenne Autumn, These Were the Sioux, Winter Thunder* . . . The first, *Old Jules,* a biography of her father, is the best known of her works as well as, perhaps, the best. "You know I consider writers and artists the maggots of society," Jules wrote his daughter when he learned of her literary activities. On his death day, he requested that she write the story "of his struggles as a locator, a builder of communities, bringer of fruit to the Panhandle."

It's 234 miles from Laramie, Wyoming, to Chadron, Nebraska, with Laramie Peak in the Medicine Bow—the same Laramie Peak that the girl Marie used to strain to glimpse over the horizon from Indian Hill—in sight for 174 of them before the descent from the Pine Ridge escarpment begins. Chadron, home to Chadron State College, is a town of 5,000 people, plus change. Driving in on the main street, I recognized Ed Detrixhe in his Carhart overalls coming out of a bookstore around the corner and followed his truck to the motel room he had checked us into an hour before. It had been better than a 500-mile drive from Clyde, Kansas, to Chadron, spread over a two-day trip to allow for investigation of the local necropoli along the way (cemeteries having a particular interest for Ed). We drank a couple of beers in the room before going to supper at the Old Main Street Inn, and sat up late over a bottle of brandy and a handful of publications orienting visitors to Mari Sandoz country.

By morning, an early September weather disturbance caused by a cold-air mass from Canada had passed through, and the sunshine struck directly from a washed sky as if earth's atmosphere had been lifted away at the horizon. We made an early start from Chadron, headed east to Hay Springs, then south across the high brown tableland to Mirage Flats, where Old Jules settled his Dutchmen more than a century before.

Ed carried a map he had acquired on his last trip to the Sand Hills, drawn by Mari's sister Caroline Pifer (still alive today at age 91), whom he met in 1990. This map was a cartographical disaster, completely out of scale and giving inaccurate mileages between the indicated points of interest. We were looking for the Church of the Sacred Heart, built on a lot donated by Old Jules to the Catholics (in the interest of community-building rather than of piety). Though the country looked familiar to Ed after nine years, a lack of topographical distinction inherent in something called the Flats made identifying landmarks difficult, although the Sand Hills themselves were visible now, floating like a tumulous fogbank on the eastern horizon across the Niobrara. Finally, he stopped to ask directions from a farmer inspecting the damage the previous night's frost had done to his tomato plants and learned we were less than a mile from the church on the washboard road.

Sacred Heart was a dusty stone block with cracked walls, standing within a shelterbreak of brown trees on five acres of sunburnt ground that crackled underfoot. We tried the locked doors, then walked back to the cemetery behind the church, its stones inscribed with familiar names: Freese, Minten, Peters, Staskiewicz, Skudlas—Skudlases and Staskiewiczs buried within ten feet of each other, and Victoria Staskiewicz lying off by herself a little. Ed Skudlas, havin[g] been in the bushes with the bloom[ing]

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Victoria as well as with her older sister, married Maggie after she informed him she was pregnant. When in due time he discovered the lie, he looked up Victoria, whom Maggie had scared into keeping her mouth shut about her own pregnancy. By now, Victoria had produced Ed's child; two years later, she poisoned herself with strychnine and died, aged 19. Today, the Staskiewiczs and Skudlases lie all together, almost side by side, under thin, weedy soil in back of the locked-up church with its Mass schedule dropping, letter by yellowed letter, from the announcement board standing to the left of the concrete steps.

Half a mile south from Sacred Heart, we came to the dugout site, where practical jokers dropped Old Jules 65 feet to the bottom of the well he was digging. They left the injured man by the side of the road for the soldiers to find on their way over to Ft. Robinson, and Jules was treated by the post's Army surgeon, Dr. Walter Reed, who wanted to amputate but was dissuaded by the patient's threat to kill him if he removed the injured foot. Though Jules kept his foot, it never healed, and he remained a cripple for the rest of his life. "I can make a living better crippled than lots of men with two good feet," he said.

We took the road east from the vanished dugout and crossed the Niobrara River, shallow and shrunken but freely flowing still in its meandering channel, to the River Place whose stone marker sits behind a wire fence just above the high-water mark. "When Mari and I were here in '92, we wondered why Jules left all this for the Sandhills," Ed remarked. "After we saw the Hill Place, though, we realized that—in this case, anyway—he wasn't crazy." (Ed's marriage to a Mari of his own produced uncertainty for either of us only when the name came at the beginning of a sentence, and then only for the space of a couple of seconds or so.)

The foundation was still outlined in the grass, not over 20 feet by 20, after someone moved the house away, leaving a thin debris field—bits of bottles and china, the brass ends of shotgun shells—like a foundered ship's. Following the fenceline, we came to a couple of forlorn apple trees dying branch by branch, 25 yards apart. More than a century old, they were all that remained of Old Jules' orchard, just enough strength left to bear a few wormy apples hanging haphazardly like forgotten ornaments on an abandoned Christmas tree. Ed and I picked an apple ch, polished them on our shirt sleeves, and ate carefully around the wormholes. The flesh was firm and pleasantly chill, a tart communion host bringing us into the presence of a long-dead past. Between the orchard and the river, ash and hackberry trees grew and, below them, the currant bushes from which Old Jules made his wine. Lastly, we climbed Indian Hill and from its small summit looked out over the valley where the corpse of the Sioux Chief Conquering Bear had lain out on its funeral scaffold in 1854. Though I stood on my toes to look over the horizon, I couldn't see as far as Laramie Peak, either.

The Sand Hills begin on climbout from the eastern rim of the Niobrara canyon. They are not made of the gravelly mixture Wyoming calls sand but of *real* sand—beach sand from an ancient sea formed by moisture and the wind into gray dunes that in time caught the blowing prairie-grass seed and sodded themselves. Here and there, blowouts occur in the sod, sandy craters on which human beings lay automobile tires to keep them from expanding until entire hills are lifted and spun away on the winds. Between the hills and ridges, folded over and softly rounded, are many lakes, ponds, and sinkholes, surrounded by dark reed beds and spotted by flocks of waterfowl. In Jules' time, the Sand Hills were home to wolves, coyotes, deer, elk, antelope, and rattlesnakes, as well as birds; today, only the wolves are gone from them, along with the Indians who have been replaced by white ranchers (some descendants of Jules' settlers, a few of them Sandozes) scattered over the mostly depopulated country. The Sand Hills, like a heaving, green sea arrested in motion, are a surreal place: impressionistic, haunting, and mystical, a vague and separate world uplifted from the surrounding plains above which they seem to float, without an earthly contact.

In moving from the River to the Hill Place, Old Jules transferred his family some 30 or 40 miles eastward by wagon. The entrance to his last home, owned by Mari's niece Celia Ostrander since her sister Flora Sandoz's death in 1995, is signaled by an historic marker beside the paved highway. Ed turned his Dodge truck into the dirt track leading away from the road at a right angle, then made another right-angle turn to the left across a cattleguard. "Oh," he exclaimed as the truck topped a rise, "it looks different than it did in '92."

We were looking into a long valley stretching between a straight ridge on the south side and broken hills making a barrier to the north. The valley was green, with marsh grasses in the bottom of the swale where, in spring, the shallow lake formed that Jules had put a rowboat on. At the eastern end of the valley, against the hills, two houses stood beneath mature shade trees, facing an apple orchard lying against the ridge. Beyond the valley, an expanse of blue water crinkled the afternoon sunlight. At the western end, opposite where the Dodge stood idling, a fenced plot showed against the steep rising behind it. "Over there's where she's buried," Ed said. He added, "They cut down the orchard between there and the dry lake—just scores and scores of fruit trees."

A sign pointing to the gravesite invited visitors to make themselves at home in the orchard, planted by Flora to Harrelson apple trees. Though the trees did not look well tended, the apples tasted fine. The single-story, cream-colored house that Jules built had been prettified since his time with windowboxes filled with flowers and other female improvements. We turned the truck around in the yard, drove back down the valley, and parked in the two-track below the grave.

Mari Sandoz lies parallel to the hillside beneath a handsome stone of purple granite surrounded by the wild prairie grasses. The guestbook, placed in a mailbox set on a post, was signed by people from around the United States and the world, the better part of them women. Celia, who tends the grave, signs in every time she pays a visit to the site. We added our names and took a few pictures. "She's been here 35 years already," Ed remarked, gently. Jules, who died in Alliance in November 1928, is buried in the cemetery over there, with Mary beside him.

Old Jules was refused by 13 publishers before being accepted by Hastings House in New York in 1935. According to Helen Winter Stauffer, Mari's biographer, the manuscript unsettled many editorial readers, in part because of the author's vengeful attitude toward her father in earlier drafts of the book. Now she lies where he ought to lie, the rise of the hill behind the grave plot greenly vivid in the light of the evening sun, pink tufts of Little Bluestem grass tossing on the wind, a living tombstone behind the granite one. Nothing here now but silence and peace—a final reconciliation, achieved by art and by eternity, between the violent undefeated pioneer and his firstborn child, the dauntless artist he so strangely sired. c

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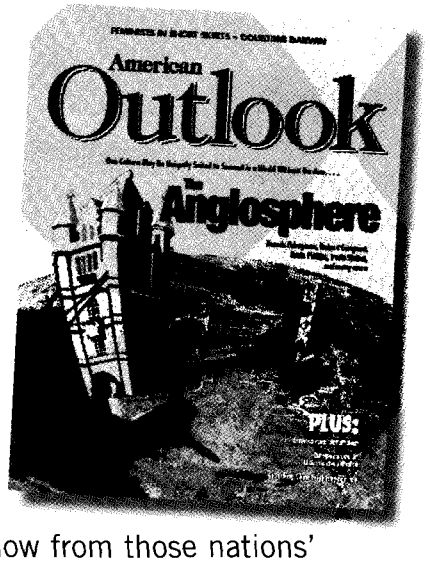
American Outlook

YOUR WINDOW ON THE FUTURE



American Outlook, a bimonthly magazine of the world's best writing on the future, examines the ideas, people, trends, and technologies at work shaping the future today.

American Outlook is realistic and optimistic, believing that any problems human beings can create, people can solve.

In this bimonthly issue:

The Anglosphere:
One culture may be uniquely suited to succeed in a world without borders.

Culture and the Future of the English-Speaking Peoples *By Francis Fukuyama*
British and American economic success and growth flow from those nations' knack for creating "social capital."

Bonds and Bureaucentrism *By Robert Conquest*
A union of English-speaking nations would provide a plausible alternative direction for the world's future political evolution.

The European Challenge to American Power *By John O'Sullivan*
America's ability to overcome ethnic differences comes in handy in its role as the sole current superpower, but the European Union's ambition to become a superstate poses significant dangers.

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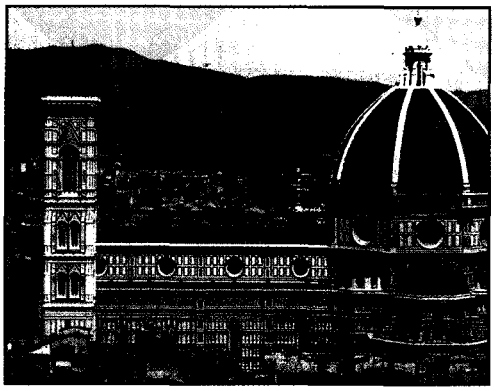
TOSCANA—LAND OF THE REAL MULTICULTURALISTS



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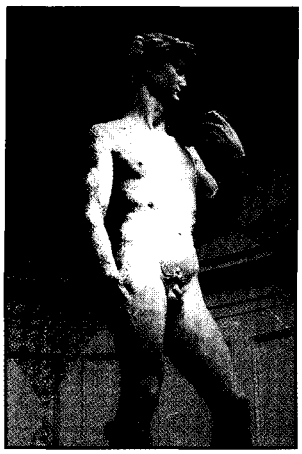
Thomas Fleming, Scott P. Richert, Andrei Navrozov, and **Christopher Check**

For an International Convivium

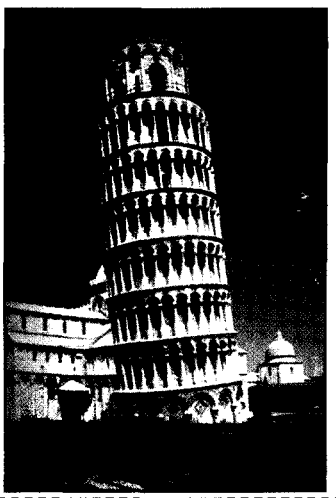
"Tuscany: The Cultural Free Market"
March 11-20, 2002
Pisa, Siena, Florence, Lucca



Where is the flame of civilization tended? In the massive furnaces of empire? Or in the hearths of small communities? Whether in ancient Greece, the Roman Republic, or the colonies of North America, civilization has flourished where unique peoples were free to cherish and practice their traditions and where "healthy bigotry," as Chesterton put it, fostered a spirit of cultural competition out of which sprang an abundance of inspiring songs, moving tales, uplifting buildings, and enduring ideas.

Today, as subjects of America's "multicultural empire," our choices are Burger King or McDonald's, Britney Spears or Christina Aguilera, Yale or Harvard, Republican or Democrat, the *New York Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*, Steven Spielberg or Steven Spielberg.

For the provincial peoples of Tuscany who recreated civilization and fought for liberty, town by town, neighborhood by neighborhood, and even street by street, the choices were Dante, Machiavelli, and Petrach, Leonardo and Michelangelo, Saint Catherine and San Bernadino. Even their villains inspired more interest: While we have to be content with Bill Clinton, the Tuscans had the brilliant and ruthless gangster-banker family, the Medici.



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